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Howard Wayland
Helen Cambrian Chapman.
January 26, 1877.

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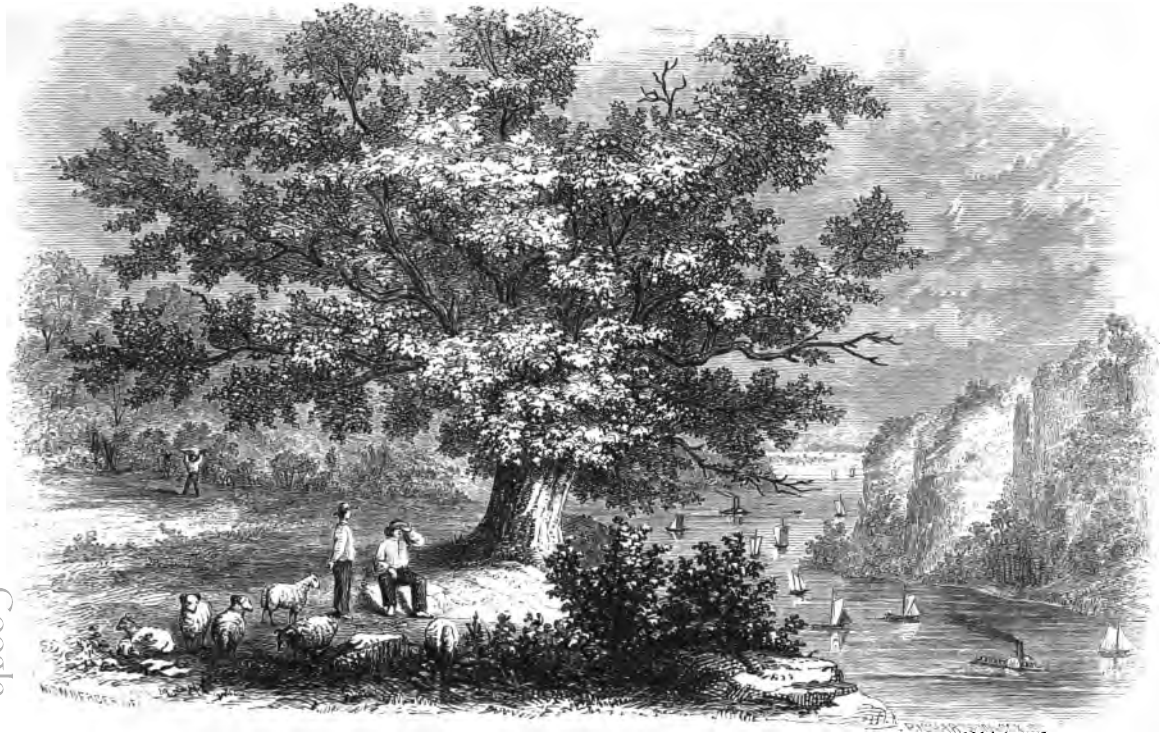

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UP THE RIVER.

By

F. W. SHELTON,

AUTHOR OF RECTOR OF ST. BARDOLPH'S, AND SALANDER THE DRAGON.

With Illustrations from Original Designs.

New-York:
CHARLES SCRIBNER, NASSAU-STREET,
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PREFATORY LETTER

TO

LOUIS GAYLORD CLARK.

IXTEEN years ago, while living near the sea-coast, I was sitting in a parlour on a pleasant summer morning, sauntering with a lazy eye over a volume of Latin poems, a portion of the delicate *opuscula*, the dexterous handiwork of VINNIUS BOURNE. I remember turning over the snowy pages of that book only because the fact is connected with one of

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more importance,—such is the mysterious principle of association which makes each petty memory the co-link in a lengthened chain. While engaged in the scansion and interpretation of a Sapphic Ode, compacted by Vinnius with an unimpeachable accuracy and adjustment of its several parts, a person bearing precisely the same name as yours, was announced—when without formality, and with a vigorous start, a friendship commenced, which up to this day, has been frank, open, genial, and above disguise—interrupted, it is hoped, by no unpardonable faults, and embittered never by any unkindly suspicions.

According to the melancholy records of social intercourse, it is a cause of gratulation, as well as a mutual compliment to both, that this fearful lapse of time has not become an impassable chasm, and that we hold the same friendship in good preservation still. Such it may be predicted will be the amiable fact, until if life remains, the dark hair on these worthy crowns shall have become as white as the driven snow, and the almond tree shall flourish.

It is not often that a tolerable contact or juxta-position can continue even for a decade of years. Business

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and the stern perplexities of life interpose their obstacles to a close affinity, and cause the elements which were disposed to coalesce, to fly apart with a centrifugal motion. Thus you may sit at the festive board with a friend, enjoy with him at intervals a day's ramble, or walk with him in a pleasant garden; but in a little time he is at the ends of the earth, the ocean rolls between you, or he has gone to "that bourne whence no traveller returns." The mountains rise above the vales to divide friendships as well as countries, and lift their hoary peaks to cut human hearts in twain. In a few years you strain your eyes over a dreary distance, where all which is between you and the horizon appears vacant air.

As we sometimes turn back after journeying a long distance to find again some Bantine thicket full of birds, some flowering dell in the mid-wilderness where there was a fountain of sweet waters, so we can but recur to these green spots of the Past, and pluck a faded leaf from memory. The arrowy course of these past years has its mile-stones composed of monuments wreathed about, as the case may be, with the green vines of spring, or with the purple foliage of autumn, or with their white shafts

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sunken in still whiter snows. The twin-spirits have been torn asunder, the poet has ceased his numbers, and the minstrel his song, and Beauty has perished in its prime, and the noble heart has become cold for ever. In the repose of Greenwood, (the suburbs of a living city) marked by many a silver lake, and wood-crowned hill, and cultivated garden, we have sometimes stood while the earth opened to swallow up those who were dearest—or pausing at the tomb of one too early lost, have exclaimed almost in the plaintive words of the classic poet:—

> Heu! quanto minus est cum reliquis versari
> Quam tui meminisse.

But a tide less deep and dark than that of Styx too often separates the friends who seemed like brothers—the wriggling, shallow stream of selfish policy. Most acquaintances proceed less from knowledge than from the want of it, and with those of deep feeling an admiration for many, which has been quickly fanned into a flame, becomes changed into a cynical mistrust for all, which poisons the heart at its warm fountain. To advance in all knowledge makes you in love with the pursuit, and instigates you to go farther, except the knowledge of men.

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I recollect upon that pleasant morning when first we met, that we went to walk in the woods, ascending first a hill-top from which a good view could be obtained, and I said to you in the musical words of Sir William Temple, "I will conduct you to a hill-side, painful indeed at the first ascent, and steep, but else so smooth, so clear, so full of goodly prospects and of harmonious sounds, that the harp of Orpheus is not more charming." It was the month of June, and the dog-wood was in blossom, and the young bark of the birch and sassafras smelled sweet, and the leaves just burst from their waxen buds had a glossy and a tender freshness, and the dells were full of singing birds, and the year was at its prime. For at the latter end of May, and in early June, when the lingering chills which come from ice-fields have given place to the sweet, warm breath of summer, and the sun cheers and gilds, without yet scorching with his rays, and the rose blushes at that identical stage of its existence which is betwixt its early budding and its prime, there is a sense of life and freshness which we annually enjoy for a little, and then bid farewell to it, perhaps for ever.

It was at this season, so propitious, that we walked

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together for the first time, O my friend, talking of those hopes which have scarce yet budded, and of those expectations which have not yet bloomed. Then all seemed fair and promising, and the thoughts of our heart borrowed their hue from the landscape, for we were in the very springtime of life.

A year later, I stood at this same spot alone, and thinking of you, broke open the seal of that letter which I held in my hand, for I never glance over an expected letter on the side-walk, hastily gobbling its contents, but hold it in reserve for some moment of leisure or fitting place. It was then that I first knew of the death of your twin-brother Willis, who has written some of the most heartfelt poetry which was ever penned. You spoke of having started, but of arriving too late to be present at his departure, for when you entered his house that night in Philadelphia he was dead. I have lost the letter, which was in few words, but remember well the impression which it made upon me; nor do I esteem you less because it may be said of you, *notus in fratrem animi paterni*, and because you are ever casting flowers upon his grave.

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Since that first meeting, I have spent many pleasant hours in your company, often sitting at evening and at mid-winter in your cheerful study, where the lights still blazed, while the storm howled without, and the snows fell on the knobbed and bony fingers of the dry Alanthus, whose knuckles were held up before your door—looking upon the fire in the grate, turning over the leaves of costly and freshly-printed books upon your table—examining pictures, reading passages in prose and poetry from classic authors—beguiling the time with anecdote and talk.

And I have often floated with you on summer days around the expansive bay which pours its wealth of waters and treasures from every clime into the bosom of our native city. I say native, although neither of us first drew the breath of life within it. But we have been nestled closely upon its great heart, and been nurtured almost within its limits, and our hopes and affections are identified with it, and it is like some beloved Argos to which the eye constantly reverts. Within our own time, from being comparatively small and without architectural adornment, and ranked in an inferior class, it has risen into a magnificent and glorious city, enlarging its borders on every

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hand, boasting its "streets of palaces and walks of state," bearing still it is true its provincial name—and although surmounted neither by the dome of the Capitol, nor the Monument of Washington, nor the halls of legislation, in all respects the Metropolis of the Western Continent;—and much as I love the country and the smell of the new-mown hay, my heart still throbs with exultation when I come near enough to hearken to the hum of Manahatta, the clashing of its ship-yards, the breathing of its Vulcanic forges, the clangour of the foundries, the note of preparation, and the sound of "armourers closing rivets up"—not for the big barbaric men who hold a spear, and whose breasts are coated with overlapping plates, but massive coatings for the hot and steaming lungs of iron horses and for the sheathing of the ships;—for bolts and bands and bars to envelope the very sinews of the arm of Peace. Oh, how much superior to man are the physic powers which he controls as with a tyrant's sway. Yes, I am proud of that city which rises up superbly out of the deep and in which Commerce glories as her own. *Hic arma hic currus.* When I see the pictured and beaded Indians listlessly and moodily still wending their way through its

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streets, the same children of Nature which they were when the keel of Hendrik Hudson first clove these waves, advanced not one jot farther in civilization, except that the scalping-knife is of necessity sheathed, and the tomahawk is buried—bearing their fictile wares and barken manufactures, and needle-work, and rattling baubles about their necks, and bringing back at a single glance the memory of the barbaric Past, and then turn to the spectacle around me, I ask myself is all this the illusion of the fancy? Is what I see the effect of magic and the doings of Genii, or is it rather that I am standing upon the last vantage ground of the human race, where the dead are quickened, and a resurrection is taking place, and society sloughing off its old prejudices, is at last bursting its shackles and swathing bands, and with gigantic strength is coming forth to a better life, to a more exalted freedom, and to a higher civilization.

And I have often floated with you on a summer evening up the River, walking the decks of a gorgeous palace, or perched high up at the extreme bow in a privileged position near the good man at the wheel-house, and while the sun sank low, and gilt the Western skies with an Ita-

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lian splendour, and with a warm and lingering glow, we shot by the lovely coasts, and enjoyed in all its variegated lights and shades the changes of that unfolding panorama. What though the day were sultry, and no breath of air was stirring on the shores, yet here the prow dashed through the strong exhilarating breeze, while on the green and sloping banks we saw the lambs strolling, their backs clothed with Spanish fleeces, and the kine reclining in easy attitudes on those rounded knolls and hill-tops which resemble the tomb of the Old Bianor. And presently we glided past the base of that most massive, solid wall of perpendicular rocks, extending on the left for miles and miles, more marvellous than the Giant's Causeway, yet seemingly the work of men, built up as if by line and plummet for the circumvallation of some immense city, with the summit of the wall all evenly cut in a direct and horizontal line, as if done by a chisel. Still as we pass by, the work appears too great for men, or even giants. Some convulsion of Nature must have wrenched open the lion-like jaws, and while on the one side they remain solid and petrified, on the other they are crumbled away and gone. In their height and length, these walls make a mere mock

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at the mud-work and masonry of man. The forests at their base, as you sail onward in the middle of the stream, look like an irregular green stripe on a basement of perpendicular cliffs, and the great parallel splits or projections on their sides have the appearance of pilasters, and the vines and foliage on the top hang over like light leaves of ornamental acanthus. I for one have never seen the walls which upheave majestic domes, which have been built by Angelo and others, but I know that they cannot equal the Palisadoes.

What an infinite variety of landscape is presented to the eye as you pass up the River. Although you see no castles, like those which are on the brink of the Rhine, yet in all their towering and natural grandeur the cliffs shoot up on which the castles ought to be;—and whether the fogs wreathe their summits, or they stand clear and well-defined in an amber atmosphere, the eye never tires of enjoyment. I have sometimes sat with you by the hour on a starlit summer evening on the roof of your house on the high hill at Piermont, looking over the broad basin of the Tappaan Zee. Nearly opposite, nestled among the trees, is the quaint and modest house of Washington Irving,

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illustrious historian, most chaste and charming writer of English undefiled, holding possession undisputed of his native patrimony of wit and humor, bounded by smiles and tears. Long may he live upon the banks of that River whose legends are blended with his undying fame, and whose tide is not more sparkling and full of pleasant images than his transparent style.

I now dedicate to you, my dear C., a volume which, however simple in its contents, and in the class of subjects of which it treats, has during the last twelve months, cost me many hours of pleasant pains and patient elaboration, and a large part of it has already passed before an eye perhaps too partial to the author. But although it is brought to an end for the present, I have not been able to include within its moderate compass one half of the topics and little adventures which are noted down in my tablets, my ivory tablets. These contain hints written in pencil, sometimes under a spreading tree, sometimes on the bank of a sparkling stream, or in a meadow, but cannot be deciphered; and again when Memory has been entrusted with something worthy of preservation, she has turned traitor.

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Many books have been already written of the like design. Of these, some handle topics which are rather suggested by an agreeable retirement in the country, having about them, like clothes which have been stored away in rose leaves, a scent of the blossoms which grew around the porch where the author was writing, but with no direct allusion to the roses themselves. Others are acknowledged and scientific works, accurately descriptive of objects in the external world, but not forbidding by their technicality;—enriched with anecdote, and almost invariably borrowing from the pleasant subject on which they treat a style flowing and harmonious. Others still are the works of amateur sportsmen and men of the world, who throw around their favourite sports and amusements in the open air and in the field, the charms and graces which are conferred by cultivated taste and an elegant education.

There is the "Journal of Summer Time in the Country" by the Rev. Robert Aris Wilmott, happily named, because it seems to be inspired by the influences which breathed around. My friend D—— made me a present of a copy of this work not long ago. It is not so much a

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journal of objects in the country, as a diary of thoughts and meditations, presenting on every page the results of a fine and delicate taste and appreciation in literature and the fine arts, enriched by apposite allusion and happy quotation from authors both ancient and modern, but especially the choice old writers and poets of England; abounding too in sharp criticism and valuable æsthetic essays,—in all respects a volume well deserving the esteem which it has met. One is brought into good company in this book wherein we have at least a gleam, a twinkle, and a recognition of beautiful thoughts which have been concealed in their setting. Had I that alcove of books to which Mr. Wilmott was so fond of retiring when he spent his "Summer Time in the Country," nothing would have pleased me better than to have made an excursion into the fields of literature after recording my walk in the woods or meadows; but for the want of books of reference I was hampered and impeded, and obliged to give up my design. Into most of the works which I wanted I had formerly dipped, and retained on the intellectual palate a grateful sense and flavour of the good things contained within them; but as it is an insult to a man to address him by a

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wrong name, so it is to an author to quote him incorrectly —as you stand convicted of the vanity of trying to improve his sense. In the few quotations which I have made which are not certified by reference I am afraid of being guilty of this fault, and plead the excuse of living in the country. It is true that within a few miles I have access to libraries of my friends, which are replete in classic stores; but I never was gifted with the patience of Boswell to travel far in order to be certain of a word or of a date. As to my own collection of books, I will get down on the marrow-bones and make confession in this part of my pilgrimage, for I always slam the door of my library whenever I see a literary man, or especially a theologian, draw nigh.

For one who has the reputation among his friends of being a man of literary tastes, unless you made allowance for a deficiency of purse, you might consider my collection of books as an anomaly in character. I can say of them truly, as of Falstaff's regiment, "No eye has seen such scare-crows. There they stand in the ranks, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, some covered with gilt, others literally in rags—some corpulent, and some thin as

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laths—some of them with dogs'-ears, and others not—some with their backs well whipped by the censors of the press who hold the lash—others in clean and dainty linen, fostered and pampered for the very dress which they wear; yet such as they are, standing side by side, Delphin Virgil next to Pilgrim's Progress—Horace Delphin next to one of Scott's novels. There never was a more beggarly array outside of Coventry. I have no Chaucer, no Shakspeare, no Cowley, no Evelyn, no any thing which I want most. But I keep upon my parlour table a copy of the Bible and of the Prayer Book to represent a standard library.

These remarks, however, on books in general, are leading me from my design of mentioning some particular works on rural subjects which have lately happened to be on my table, or have fallen within my reach. Of Bartram and Wilson and Audubon I need not speak, because they hold a distinct and elevated position as scientific authorities; but in addition to research and accuracy on topics which are by no means dry and unattractive, they are, for the mere charms of style, to be ranked with some of the best models of classic composition. Very few but the purest men, gifted with a sentiment for the Beautiful, and

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native taste, are disposed to devote a life-time to such researches, the whole tendency of which is to lead them to elevated views of the Divine perfections, to a cheerful moralizing, and the adoption of a healthy philosophy, which looks upon the bright side of things. They are the benefactors of mankind.

Downing's work on Landscape Gardening is the best monument of its lamented author. Had he lived a little longer, he would have fulfilled all the aims of an honourable and earnest ambition—but in the prime of life, and in the brightness of a summer morning, he sank and perished in the waves of that very river whose banks he had done so much to embellish and adorn.

N. P. Willis is the author of "Letters from Under a Bridge," a book marked by all the peculiarities of a cunning and felicitous writer, who still from his home at Idlewild, contributes papers from time to time on similar themes, which are considered among the most happy productions of his pen.

My friend M——, who is too modest to place his name on a title-page, and therefore, without his permission, I shall not take the liberty of mentioning it, has given

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to the public a book which with a peculiar aptitude at nomenclature, he has styled "Up-Country Letters." The title alone would be an inducement to take it up. It is extremely breezy, and does great credit to its amiable author, abounding in much delicate limning, and many sketches of character. May it find a place on the shelves of every library.

It is only within the few past weeks that I received a copy of "Rural Hours, by a Lady," of which, though anonymous, the authorship is well traced, and which is already extensively and favourably known. I should be sorry to omit the mention of this book, which perhaps more than any other, cuts into the exact plan of this volume. But it is much more full in all matters concerning rural life—a complete compend, omitting nothing. Indeed it would be difficult to think of any thing in the whole range of Nature which attracts your immediate attention in the few seasons of the year of which a mention is not made in this ample volume. Even the little yellow butterflies which hover in companies by the wayside pool, are kindly remembered.

But happily the subject of the country is still inex-

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haustible, and there is an infinite variety in the objects which it presents, and in the phases which afford themselves at every turn to the eye of the loving and faithful painter. In some old Flemish pictures which I have observed, every leaf upon a tree is minutely copied with a truth and fidelity which the Daguerreotype could alone rival;—and this one tree would be a long study for a master. If therefore a single tree, or even an old stump, be worthy of transcription with its few knotted, gnarled, crooked and dead branches, and the more ungainly, so much the more picturesque, and better,—what multitudes of pictures and images may be jotted down by the lover of Nature, let him direct his steps whither he will, but especially in those favourite and secluded spots which are peculiarly his own.

There is indeed no object so desolate in the country as to be devoid of interest, whether it be a stone fence, a corn-stack, an old house, or an old barn. One of the sweetest poems which Burns wrote was on so simple a theme as the turning up of a field-mouse in a furrow. On this account, it would appear that no apology can be needed for trenching upon trite themes, or that I have

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said so much about my chickens. Whatever spreads abroad a love and admiration for rural pursuits, is so much done for the good of men. The prosperity of the country is marked, not so much by the growth of its cities, as by the enlarging boundaries of its cultivated lands. Great towns are peculiarly suitable for none but those who have a vigorous ability to develope commerce, or to occupy some appropriate position in the crowded mart. The collection of useless members in their purlieus produces congestion and deadly vice. It is certain that a majority of the energetic young men who are growing up, have a disposition to expend their enterprise in other *fields* rather than in those literally which demand culture around them. But there is nothing which exercises a stronger influence in establishing a feeling of self-respect, a love of country, a pride of citizenship, a veneration for sacred law and just government, than the sentiment which accompanies the possession of one acre of a man's native soil. All the bank stock in the world would not produce the same effect. And in our happy land, no man, not even the poorest, is precluded from the possibility of such an ownership. It is on these accounts no useless or unpro-

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fitable task to endeavour to throw around the idea of a home in the country, however humble, a little of that rosy embellishment which alleviates toil and adds to its intrinsic value.

And now farewell. Already the frosts have whitened the ground. Perhaps before another spring returns to strew the earth with flowers, and the voice of singing birds is heard again, I shall tempt the billows of the deep, touch for the first time the shores of merry England, stand by the grave of Shakespeare, the banks of Avon, and of Ridal Water. May the voyage be prosperous, the exploration pleasant, and the return speedy.

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OH, HOW CANST THOU RENOUNCE THE BOUNDLESS STORE
OF CHARMS WHICH NATURE TO HER VOTARY YIELDS—
THE BUBBLING FOUNTAIN, THE RESOUNDING SHORE,
THE POMP OF GROVES AND GARNITURE OF FIELDS;
ALL THAT THE BOUNTEOUS RAY OF MORNING GILDS,
AND ALL THAT ECHOES TO THE SONG OF EVEN;
ALL THAT THE MOUNTAIN'S TOWERING SUMMIT SHIELDS,
AND ALL THE DREAD MAGNIFICENCE OF HEAVEN—
OH, HOW CANST THOU RENOUNCE, AND HOPE TO BE FORGIVEN?

Beattie.

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UP THE RIVER.

I.

N ingenious friend of yours, (shall I say also of mine?) the author of the 'Morning Watch,'* once wrote a charming account of an event which is apt to occur in households. As it was true to Nature, the language came home 'familiar as Household Words' to the bosoms of those concerned; and as it was in the unwrought vein of epistolary richness, it was as pleasant as the receipt of a bank-note enclosed in a letter through the post-office. It has already been pasted in note-books, or

* And also of the "Up-Country Letters."

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folded up, duly endorsed with the date, and deposited in some pigeon-hole for future reference, as a document worthy of being preserved. For my own part, I have it in memory, which is tenacious of such matters, and in a bound volume of the KNICKERBOCKER Magazine, which is still more to be relied on than mere memory.

How delightful, and beyond the value of the stamp, is a sincere letter! Newspaper creates excessive anticipation, but what is that compared with a well-known handwriting, and a red seal, broken open with avidity because we know that a message of friendship is underneath? But one gradually gets out of the habit of letter-writing. As cares multiply, and the freshness of life becomes changed to the sere and yellow leaf, the springy feeling vanishes which gave a letter its delight, and it becomes a cold and formal scrawl. For myself, the notion seizes me to express myself with some degree of heart in this mode, not perennially, (as girls at boarding-school,) but annually; or rather let me say, in a bad coinage, printem-ennially. The other night, or rather morning, (for it was three by the watch which ticked under my head,) as the full, round, dry, brassy moon flooded my chamber with light, and no sleep came, I said to myself, 'I feel

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like writing a letter: I have not written one for a year. It shall be to the dear friend of fifteen long years of unintermitted friendship, and I will give him an account of my first attempt at housekeeping.' An orchestra of whip-poor-wills, sparrows which sing at night, chimney-swallows, who keep up an incessant twittering overhead, and dogs baying the silent moon, raucous frogs in the near creek, crying '*Breke-ke-kex-koax-koax!*' and one mosquito, the 'first of the season,' did not act like McMunn's Elixir on nerves indisposed to be at rest. 'Lucifer!' At the word of incantation, a blue Will-o-the-wisp-like star hung in mid-air, and a strangulating smell of sulphur filled my nose. I sat down to write until the gray dawn, then to lie down again and sleep soundly until the smell of coffee and the tinkling bell.

My dear C—, (*Here the letter proper begins.*) if there be any luxury, it is that of being under your own roof, whether leaky or not. This sentiment is never experienced but by EXPERIENCE, and will never be more forcibly expressed than in the words of our own JOHN HOWARD PAYNE, lately deceased American Consul at Tunis, who is the author of that ever-to-be-remembered song, beginning:

> "'Midst pleasures and palaces though I may roam,
> Be it ever so homely, there's no place like home."

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My home at present, is a small, very small house, standing back from the highway, and almost lost like a wren's nest amid the foliage. It is said to be haunted, but no ghosts save those of my own thoughts have as yet troubled me, or will do so during my residence in it, as I am not particularly interested in the theory of 'spiritual rappings.' Unfortunately, as I had it well white-washed before going into it, I get rubbed every day, and as the story above stairs is only a half story, have my hat smashed on going up, if I am such an ill-mannered idiot as to wear a hat in the house. The stairs are so precipitous, that I also tumble up and tumble down. Herein the first difficulty was felt in my first attempt at housekeeping. I had an old bureau very dear to me, which I of course expected to have up stairs, but after sundry trials with it, lengthwise, and edgewise, and otherwise, the engineers stated it as their opinion that it could not go up. What were we to do, for this bureau was particularly needed? In a fit of ill-humor I had it deposited below, where it represents an old side-board very well. The first day's work consisted in tacking down matting, which will look very decent and respectable while the summer lasts; and in getting up bedsteads, whereon to sleep during the approaching night; and

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in unpacking a box of crockery, so as to obtain cups and saucers, and plates, and a tea-pot, in order that we might drink tea. For a loaf of bread and some butter, and a bunch of radishes, we were indebted to the kindness of a neighbour: and the first meal in our new house, rest assured, was not without relish; nor was the first rest under our roof not sweet. On the next day, bright and early, being awakened by the sound of a horn, I went out and purchased two 'shads,' one for breakfast, the other for dinner. Rest assured, also, that with a cup of coffee and bread-and-butter, and the shad, the breakfast passed off well; and in less than half an hour came a present of a bunch of fresh asparagus and lettuce, while the butcher passing by, and perceiving a new-comer, provided us with a leg of lamb, which came in good time for a new stove, just put up, and the garden was redolent with mint. Thanks! thanks! My mind was now much at ease, and I forthwith began to set my house in order, as I was not in danger of starving in the meantime, for our kind neighbours already had their eye upon our wants. Our wants are many. There is no end of the things essential and desirable in housekeeping; and after you have anticipated all which you could think of, what a lack remains! Cullenders, and sieves, and tubs, and buckets, and

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pails, and nutmeg-graters, and spice-boxes, and baskets, and ropes, and cords, and rings, and clothespins, and nails, and tacks, and hammers, and saws, and brushes, and no body can conjecture what else! After you have these, the demand is still the same, and we have as yet been reduced to the disagreeable necessity of borrowing much of our next neighbor, who is very kind and forbearing. Now I begin to see the responsibility of housekeeping; but after all, the main difficulty is at the start.

Having got fairly settled, one of my first thoughts was in the direction of the garden, at which I went to work with all the zeal imaginable, and it has already cost more than it will come to. This however, is only reckoning by dollars and cents. For how hard it is to buy a fresh lettuce, or a cucumber just plucked from the vines; a mess of peas picked a half hour before they are cooked; a bunch of radishes pulled a moment ago from the earth. Your tomatoes, early potatoes, sweet corn, beans, and salsify, bought in a market, are really valueless, compared with those just gathered in your garden. Taste and see. They are as far separate from one another in excellence as staleness is from dewy freshness; as the wilted shrivelled leaf from the

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crisp, crackling, sparkling vegetation. What then, if I have hired a man to dig my garden, shall I not be recompensed? There is a sentiment about these things. The moment that you begin to cultivate a rood of ground, the dignity of a landholder begins. You may at once discourse with those who own miles of territory, and come to a serious consultation with Professor MAPES as to the best modes of culture, the best seed to be planted, and how to raise most on half an acre. Since I planted my garden, which includes the fourth of an acre, I have walked in it once or twice a day, to see what has peeped out of the ground, and whether I am going to have a mess of green peas and sweet corn as early as the fourth of July. My beans are the most ambitious vegetable which I have at present. They have outstripped corn, peas, cucumbers, and potatoes, and exhibit themselves in well-defined rows as you look from a distance. I have some okra, parsnips, carrots, celery in the ground, in reference to soup whereof a ready plate, if well made, is not to be despised, and having a good cellar——

By the by, you ought to see my cellar—deep, capacious, cool as an ice-house, and already containing good store of milk, pot-cheese, and yellow butter. The butter of Dutchess county is as good as

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that of Goshen, sweet, golden, and fragrant. A daily collection of crusts, parings, etc., have lately impressed my mind with the feasibility of keeping a pig; not that there is any profit in it, but as I should undoubtedly feed him well, his pork would be more rosy, tender, and delicious; the fat and lean more amicably, inextricably blended. The hams, the sausages, the cheeks, the head-cheese, the souse, prepared and cured at home, are more relishable. Beside all this, there is an indefinable pleasure in looking into pig-pens. The porcine grunt which greets the sound of steps indicative of feed, the nose and fore-foot thrust into the dry trough, and the spectacle of animal appetite carried to the most magnificent extent of which it is capable. There is satisfaction, surely, in seeing the refuse which you have offered accepted with such avidity. How unlike the ungrateful beggars, who when you offer them a ticket for really good soup, almost spit in your face! To keep a pig I am now nearly resolved. I like to see his tail curl, if nothing else; and I like to see him brought home on a man's shoulders in a bag, squealing tremendously.

I want to get a Shanghai hen. Do you know any one who can spare a Shanghai hen? I would not be without fowls, especially in the spring, when

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they are so exorbitantly dear in market. Do you recollect that *spring chicken*, whereof we partook not long since? When it came on table it occupied as much space as a spread eagle on a gold coin, no more. 'Speaking of chickens,' permit me to sympathise with you on the loss of your rooster, the distressing intelligence of whose demise reached me in the Editor's Table of the May KNICKERBOCKER. As I read your account of finding him one morning stiff and stark, with his heels in the air, the tears almost came into my eyes. What cut off your bird? Was it the pip, or was it the gapes? I think my next-door neighbour does not want me to keep chickens. I asked him, 'if they cost as much as they came to.' 'Yes,' he said, 'a great deal more.' He is probably afraid that they will go scratching in his enclosures. I shall keep the chickens and stand the damage. I must have my fresh-laid egg for breakfast. You know nothing about the value of eggs in the city, except that they are so many for a shilling. An egg not bad or doubtful, is good according to your ideas: but let me tell you that a stale egg differs much in quality from a fresh one; and when you come to live in the country, you grow wise in these things.

This is a beautiful region. The everlasting mountains, inhabited by rattle-snakes, gird me in; and

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the solitude is only broken by the occasional scream of a steam-whistle on the Hudson River Rail-road. What an eye-sore is that improvement of the age! It has clipped off all the promontories which jutted into the river, and marred the beauty of every choice residence upon its banks, interposing pools of stagnant water upon its line. But it is a great convenience after all. Science is an irreligious Vandal, and makes a mock at beauty. Farewell. Perhaps I shall take a notion to write another letter when I get my hennery in full action, and my pig-pen built. Come and hear my cocks crow, my pig grunt, my dog bark, and my cat mew!

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II.

July 5th, 1852.

THIS year, by a freak of the calendar, the glorious Fourth falls upon Sunday, and the large amount of patriotism in the country has to be bottled up until Monday morning. When this occurs, the clergy get the start of the prophets of the groves by a single day, and wrapping themselves up in the American flag, supersede the legitimate orators of the day by a little pulpit eloquence. Principles of '76, star-spangled banner, forefathers of the Revolution, blood-bought freedom, together with a liberal allowance of gunpowder flashes illuminate the

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track of sermons, while the Fourth-of-July Committee attentively listen, and the little Sunday-school boys sit underneath, their pockets already filled with Chinese crackers, which seem expressly made for the barbarians. Are the citizens of this free country going to be cheated out of their only holiday (Thanksgiving excepted) by the intervention of a Sunday? Certainly not! Toward sun-down, a little of the effervescence begins to escape, and you hear the popping of occasional guns in the hands of young men of a defective piety, and stray sparks steal into a few Chinese packs. Before sun-rise on the next day, the banging and bell-ringing are incessant, and soon the demand on horse-flesh is unparalleled with any day in the year. It is the festival of livery-stable keepers, and the blistering heat makes it the very purgatory of horses. Villages to whose turn it does not fall to 'celebrate' soon look as solemn as the grave, while the highways are thronged with both sexes going to the *fete;* and the display of white trowsers and gay bonnets is immense. Were I in New-York, I should eschew the affectation of flying to the country to the imaginary pleasures of troublesome pic-nics, and would stand the disgusting racket of gunpowder explosions for a sight of the soldiers and martial display, which fills me with delight. But not having

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a fancy for the fussification made in small towns, I shall keep quiet, and write a letter to my friend the 'Old Knick,' no doubt at this moment in the shady retreats of Dobbs' Ferry, unsealing packets of the aforesaid diabolical crackers for the patriotic and juvenile young Knicks.

Herein I may adventure perhaps a little advice. Though brimstone may be appropriate enough for one of your *cognomen*, for mercy's sake, do not train up the young to be familiar with the smell. I was standing by the Park Fountain some few years ago, waiting for the fireworks in front of the City Hall to be let off, when a diminutive boy fired a heavily-loaded, hard-rammed pistol at my very ear. I thought I should have gone mad: I was deaf, dumb, blind, nearly choked for the instant, and my next feeling was one of revenge. What was my satisfaction, then, to see an elderly gentleman, whose nerves had been alike shattered, single out the offending urchin, box his ears soundly, and, though I was sorry to hear him swear, apply his foot with a hearty good will to the juvenile rear! It did me more good than the 'Battle of Navarino.' If it were worth while, I could write an essay full of detestation for Chinese crackers. Yet if you say a word about them in this country, you are put down. I was on one

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Fourth-of-July evening sitting on a quiet piazza, afar from the noise and smoke of the day, as I thought, speaking of this very nuisance to a very staid and religious man of family. I said that there were some things connected with the observance of this day which should be repugnant to a Christian people. The reading of the Declaration of Independence, beside being a great bore, because nearly all were familiar with the document, was an unnecessary trumping up of old grievances, which ought to be forgotten. It was the rekindling of animosities with those toward whom we now entertained the sentiments of peace and good-will. And beside, I said, for my Christian friend was an officer of the American Peace Society, 'indulging the young with pistols and gunpowder——'

"Oh, pa! pa! do let us have one pack more! We won't set fire to anything, indeed we won't."

The delegate of the Peace Convention thrust his arm into his coat-pocket, drew out a string of red crackers, flung them to the boy, and told him to fire them in the barrel. So the argument was ended.

Since my last to you, some little progress has been made in housekeeping, gardening, and so forth. I have had my lawn trimmed, and got a load of hay, so that I shall be ready for horses or ready for asses.

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The first are more useful, the latter more amusing. I look forward with high aspiration to keeping a cow. A degree of comfort and satisfaction is involved in having one on your own premises, and to notice her meek look as she stands in the barn-yard of a summer evening letting herself be milked, and chewing the cud (how much better than chewing the *quid!*); the form of the dairy-maid by the side of the polished, brass-girt maple-pail: the hollow sound of the snowy cataract, covered with bubbles and effervescence, and the squeezing out of the last rich drops! Occasionally she will be vicious, for some cows are undeniably born for condemnation; and I do not know in the course of my rustic observation a worse animal, and one more possessed by the devil, than an ill-disposed cow. She is stubborn, heady, high-minded, will have her own way, open gates with her tongue, or her teeth, or her horns, eat up your cabbages, and kick over the pail. Tie her by the horns to the fence, and whip her well with a long stick, but do not heave a paving-stone against her side. Vaccine matter alone should make us grateful to the whole herd. Above all things, never sacrifice your temper to crooked horns. Think of the satisfaction of sitting down at your tea-table, with your elegant hereditary silver milk-pot, (or, if

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you have not silver, one of Britannia metal will do on a pinch,) containing undiluted milk. (We have no pumps in this neighbourhood.) Go into your deep-dug cellar, and look at those shallow dishes whereon the rich cream gathers, and oh! the golden butter, the cheeses, the streams of buttermilk, desi derated by pigs, the high enjoyment of a frozen pyramid on a sultry night!

I told you of losing my canary, did I not? At any rate, I will furnish the particulars now. My friend LEMON, going out of town, gave me one by name DICKY, an accomplished singer. I walked round to ARCHIE GRIEVES's, in Barclay-street,* and bought a package of rape-seed; and that afternoon we bundled ourselves into the coach, with a deal of bother, for who likes to carry a cage on his lap? I got the troublesome trunks on board, took the carpet-bags and cage, and hung the latter on a hook under the deck of the steamboat 'Armenia,' which was soon on her way to Newburgh. Got the bird ashore with much trouble and, after getting packed

* "ARCHIE's is the place to go to," says the Editor of the KNICKERBOCKER; "it is a perfect museum of four-footed beasts and fowls of the air: dogs of all descriptions, big and little; monkeys, foxes, rabbits, squirrels; all kinds of singing and other birds, including that *rara-avis*, a veritable black swan. We took 'Young KNICK' there one morning, and 'by'r Lady' 'twas as much as we could do to entice him away. He wanted to 'see the monkeys more!'"

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somehow or other into a crowded coach, held the bird again with much inconvenience. Let him out for an hour or so on Sunday morning, when he seemed much at home. Put him in again, and then placed the cage on the piazza. We have no cat. I do not keep a cat. I had not seen one near the premises. In less than ten minutes a nasty black-and white one came creeping and skulking along the fence, while my back was turned, knocked over the cage, and let out the bird; and as I ran out, nothing could be seen but a glimpse of his yellow wing and the tip end of the tail of the retreating cat. I found EVELINA in tears, but for my own part have no tears in the socket for misfortunes of this kind. I have the cage still on hand. Don't you know where I could procure a good canary?

To make up for the loss of our canary, we have a thousand swallows in the chimney, who keep up a continual twittering and chattering by night and by day. There is a round hole in the fire-place, through which a stove-pipe was wont to go. The other morning I found one of these birds sitting therein, dressing up his blue wings with his beak, and looking into the room most unconcernedly. It is a pleasure to see them every evening, glancing about with the rapidity of electric flashes, and diving down at last into the

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square mouthed cavern, from which they are not at present in danger of being smoked out. They keep their feathers in excellent order, and look as if they had been curried and rubbed down by ZEPHYR. We have a nest of wrens near by. This bird, who allows you to come near enough to put salt upon his tail, is very musical, singing constantly, but in short snatches immediately repeated, and not drawn out like the notes of a canary, which are sometimes enough to make you stop your ears with wax, and hold your breath. The other day, several birds in my enclosure, Sir ROBERT LINCOLN, ROBIN, etc., the whole conducted by Signor REDHEAD WOODPECKERINI, followed one another in a curious succession of notes which very closely resembled the well-known air in *Robert le Diable:*

'TE-TUM—te tum-te tum—da-da-da-da.
'TUM-ra, ra, ra, radadada-de.
'Te RUM-ra ra,' etc., etc.

At this season of the year a great many birdlings, with none too many feathers on their wings, in their first attempts to fly, fall on the grass and chirp long and loud, in answer to the call of the parent-bird, in consequence of which you easily take them. I yesterday caught a young robin, but he pecked my hand so severely that I flung him back into the lilac-bush,

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being of opinion that a bird with such a temper was not worth a cage. Sitting in my quiet study in this valley, which is remarkably cool, (because the air perpetually draws through from the river like a funnel,) and the birds continue to sing as vivaciously as ever at mid-day, I was just thinking, as I listened to the wren, the boblink, and the cat-bird, of the superiority of nature to art. I have heard JENNY LIND when the ears of five thousand were literally fed on the most impalpable and attenuated notes of that divine voice, as the same number of people were once miraculously fed on a mere morsel of bread. But what is LIND to LINNET?

There sings with glee, upon the tree
Before my chamber-door,
The sweetest bird I ever heard
In all my life before.

The trilling note which shakes his throat
Is rich, and ripe, and round;
Not JENNY's voice has to our choice
More melody of sound.

In wood and dell, I know full well,
Where nightingales are heard,
She learned in part her blessed art
To imitate the bird.

Perhaps you may wish to know my success in gardening. Never was the head of a neglected boy more scratched than my enclosures have been by my neighbors' fowls. If I have worked an hour to

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put seeds into the ground, they regularly undo the work by scratching them all up, and then making sundry round holes to deposit their vermin-covered bodies in the cooling earth. Confound them! if I kept such a thing as a loaded gun I would scatter enough *down* over my garden to make a feather-bed. But I will not do it, because I consider *peace* better than *peas*. These delinquent chickens are perfectly conscious of guilt. In a barn-yard, where they are legitimately scratching on a dunghill, they let you approach within a foot; but in a garden, where they see you twenty yards off, they turn tail, put their heads down, and run, as if they expected to be peppered with shot. Notwithstanding these provoking poachers, who have materially diminished my enthusiasm for the hoe and spade, I have managed to raise a few radishes. What more refreshing and delightful, especially in early spring, when sated and disgusted with grease and animal diet, than a tumbler full of short-top, scarlet radishes, placed upon your tea-table, to be accompanied with sponge-like bread and grass butter? How fresh, crisp, crackling, sparkling, they are, as you take them out of water! How you love to snap them in two like brittle glass, dip the ends in a little salt, and crack them to pieces in your feverish mouth! Such in-

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dulgence is a harmless epicurism, which the present state of sumptuary laws does not forbid. I do hope that radishes may be spared, although I foresee that the days of salad are numbered, because lettuce contains opium, as is well known. On Sunday last we enjoyed a simple and delicious dinner, which did not keep the cook from church, and did not take half an hour in preparation. I cannot say that I regret to say, that it was neither the triumph of my own garden, nor of my own larder; but what is pleasanter, it was the proof of neighbourly kindness: a mess of Windsor beans and of juvenile peas, with a head of lettuce of the very tenderest and most crackling description, dressed according to the recipe of SYDNEY SMITH, accompanied with a ruddy slice of broiled ham, and some new potatoes. For these and all HIS other benefits, GOD'S holy name be praised!

POSTSCRIPT: JULY 14.—In my last, in the course of some desultory remarks upon fowls, I stated my wishes with regard to a Shanghai hen, not supposing that many of that breed cackled on this side the Himalaya Mountains. This day, at the hour of three, while dining very frugally on some marrowfat peas, young beans, a salad, and some few slices of bacon,

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while at the same time the refreshing rain was falling upon the parched earth, and the fogs drifted over the mountains, I observed a carriage at the gate. Presently there was deposited a basket well covered with canvas; and on peeping in, I discovered a cock and hen of the Shanghai breed! A polite missive accompanied the same, and on the card which contained the donor's name, was written in pencil, 'BEHOLD THE SHANGHAIS!' This was the considerate gift of a gentleman who has a charming place near the banks of the Hudson river, to me at present a stranger. I put the fowls in the corn-crib, and they have kept up a prodigious cackling, drumming of the wings, and crowing ever since. The Shanghais crow very *strong*. I am now going into the business of raising fowls in earnest, and will bring you a basket of eggs when I come again. The oysters which I promised you when I lived on the water-side I could not well send, because when I had them ready, a party of friends arrived, and we ate them up.

SUN-DOWN.—The neighbours have been over to look at the fowls. There is at present a prevalent fancy for high breeds. They are imported from the ends of the earth, and sold at a costly valuation. The other day, being at the steamboat landing I noticed a box covered with slats, addressed to some

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person in the western part of this State. It contained a great variety of unknown fowls, by no means like those which were seen by the hungry Peter, which he considered 'common.' Their feathers varied from the meekest dove-color to an almost tropical brilliancy. Among the lot I recognized the towering Shanghais, and the beautiful Lilliputian Seabright Bantam, *Pride* in miniature.

II.

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III.

July 18, 1852.

IN my last I informed you of the reception of a couple of Shang hais, a cock and a hen. They are docile and magnificent birds, distinguished by an erect military carriage, and with voices which appear to be clarified with rock candy. I put them in the crib for three or four days until they should become domesticated. But they immediately take to their new home. How different from cats!

This is not the first time that I have received presents of this kind: not long since some im-

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perial sherry; and I have my doubts whether the course for me would not be to turn imperial beggar, to come out boldly and state my wants, when there is no 'manner of doubt' that they would be supplied; for there are so many people who, to quote the language of Mr. SMITH, my neighbour, 'take an interest into me,' that I should have my enclosures full of blood stock. I learn by your note to me that you went to MORRIS's great sale at Fordham fully cocked and primed with the intention of procuring Shanghais, which was baffled because only short-horns and Durhams were offered by the auctioneer. A dreadful fatality attends our efforts, when directed toward making a gift! It would not be at all surprising if I got another pair of Shanghais from some quarter or other, but this would be a work of supererogation, as I am already supplied. The yellow legs of these fowls are covered with down, and they afford a fine chance for the abandoned chicken-stealer, as they permit you to take them from the roost without flutter or noise. Their excellence was discovered by the missionaries at Shanghai in China, and you will find their pictures drawn to the life in books on poultry. If I mistake not, that excellent work written by Mr. ABIJAH COCK was published before the importation of the bird.

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Some people in these parts have lately turned their chickens and even cattle into the oat-fields. It would remind you of PHARAOH'S times to walk abroad, for the grasshoppers have become 'a burden.' They literally strip the fields of vegetation, and go in hosts. After consuming the corn, the hay, and the oats, in their raging gluttony they hop into the win dows, and attack the rugs and carpets. The other day they bit my hand and bit my cheek, and ate a hole in my new coat, and their mouths are full of molasses. *Hops* are abundant, but other crops will be rare. Hay is already exorbitantly high, I mean in the market. On the edges of the high-ways they have literally gnawed out the roots of the grass, leaving the surface as bare as the Boston Common after the Fourth of July. Frogs, who have hitherto carried off the palm in hopping, leap into the wells out of sheer vexation, and remain in their cool seclusion until drawn up in buckets.

While the locusts this year move in advance, and the grasshoppers forage among the corn, General POTATO-BUG has squatted down with his innumerable hosts in the gardens and patches At night they betake themselves to their brown wings, and with their stomachs full of potatoes sit down in a new place I have impaled a half-dozen of them on the steel

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point which writes this, and I now proceed to attack them with my pen. For other kind of bugs you use quills, only the feather end, dipped in corrosive sublimate instead of corrosive ink. But of these enemies of the Irish people nobody knows how to get rid. They are a teeming nuisance, and if you mash one of them on your hand it immediately raises a blister, like the monkey's kiss inflicted on the dear little sister of the baboon. It is supposed that the incursion of the bugs is owing to the want of more stringent game-laws, but in PHARAOH'S times, when they did not go a-shooting they had them in abundance. It is more than probable, however, that the Egyptians excelled in snares, and got more birds than we do now by powder and shot. *Ho torto o ragione:* am I right or wrong?

NINETEENTH.—To-day it is hot, hot! Walking among the mountains to get milk-weed, I came upon a clear stream fretting over the stones. Searching out a resplendent pool where the willows drooped, taking a bird's-eye view lest some MUSIDORA might be at hand, looking around warily to see that the coast was clear of snakes, I stuck my cane into the velvet turf upon the marge, and hanging thereon a beacon shirt, upon my word, accoutred as I was, I

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plunged in. *O fons Bandusiæ splendidior vitro!* O delightful rivulet in Dutchess county, clear as crystal! how refreshing to the weary traveller in search of milk-weeds! How welcome each advancing ripple, pictured and tinted with the wild rose which grew upon the marge, as if the spirit of the flower had become detached from its corporeal form, and been translated to the lymph! It was a bath of roses, O my friend, which Croton fascets and pewter tubs cannot afford. For who would touch a filthy flesh-brush!—oh horrible!—hung up for general use in the steaming bath-house, when he can have the friction of the willow-branches, which, like the long hair of the Nereids, float upon the stream? More pleasant far to let your head rest upon a rock, to be embraced and cradled by the living waves, cast your eyes up to the blue sky, mark the castles, mountains, and Alpine masses formed by the white clouds, and with a soul purified from every earthly stain, and every nerve re-strung, imagine much, and gather strength and courage in your buoyant arms, which just hung nerveless at your side. There as I lay I heard with satisfaction the sound of the broiling locusts, and the horns which called the laborer to his meal, and the enchanting music of the bobolink. The cat-bird sang his superior cavatina in the bush; the larches and the

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mountain-pines swayed with a faint celestial melody; the willows sighed. Then came floating along in the amber-cells of the refreshed brain sweet memories of the poets; what HORATIUS says in his odes; what VIRGILIUS in his eclogues; what PLINIUS in his letters; what the classic muse of IZAAK WALTON, and all the Aldine bards. From the bath one rises up a better man; and he must be a grovelling wretch indeed who would go to do a mean or sordid act before his hair is dry. It allays the mind, quickens intellect, abates *ennui*. Oh! how flat, weary, stale, and unprofitable does life appear 'in a dry and thirsty land where no water is!' The earth is regenerated in baptism. In my present domicile I have one substitute for a bath, which I admit is a poor one, and would meet with the contempt of any Turk, and that is a sponge and big tub, in which I dabble two or three times a day, reading or writing at the same time. That is what I am doing now, and it is no small matter to keep the paper dry. Sometimes when it rains I sit on a stone under a gutter at the corner of the house pushing aside a wild rose-bush, and so take it. This is good, but the country is at present afflicted with drouth. The corn wants a drink. The *blades* demand it both here and in the state of Maine, but heaven and earth at

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present distil nothing. What will become of us if we want water as well as rum?

It is glorious toward the close of a sultry day, when you can see the flood of rarified air play and vibrate over the fields like a fine steam, to hear the cry: 'There is a shower coming!' and presently the sun is clouded, fresh breezes fan the forehead, the clouds come trooping over the mountains in delightful angry blackness, the thunder rolls, the forked lightnings begin to play, the dust and leaves whirl in eddies, and in the distance you hear a steady roar, like the beating of breakers on the coast. Then come a few hail-shots from the advance-guard of the storm, then a few icy flakes and round pellets tumbling from the piazza. The winds grow furious; the trees bend low; the brittle willow branches and worm-eaten locust-boughs fall to the ground; and at last, in one illuminated sheet, illuminated by constant flashes the rain falls. How great the disappointment when the clouds promise the impending storm, marshal themselves for an hour on the mountain-tops, then pass by to discharge their honey on some other thirsty place! Sometimes we are envious of Orange sometimes of Westchester. We see the falling showers in the distance, and know that other parts of the heritage are refreshed while we pant and fan

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ourselves, and the heated pig stretches himself at full-length in the way-side gutter—a picture of beastly luxury which makes one smile. While I now write all this is coming to pass. My apples and plums are fast falling to the earth, shaken off by the wanton wind. The girl has just brought in an egg laid by the Shanghai hen, guided to the nest by a triumphant cackle, which proclaimed that another egg was laid.

Speaking of birds, one remark, if you please, on robins. There is a nest upon a neighbouring tree, and I was glad to see their young mouths open, and the earth-worm dropped by the parent-bird into the ruddy gulfs. At last they took their first lessons in the flying art, venturing from limb to limb, and from bush to bush. A hawk, wheeling in bold circles, and with his eye intent, at one fell swoop seized one of these young innocents in his talons, and cropt his education in the bud. He was pursued and picked at by a number of little screaming birds, but bore his prey aloft to a mountain rock, where he picked out its eyes and fluttering heart. Munching and chewing at his entrails, the gluttonous hawk might say, 'This is a tender pullet, and has grown fat on flies. Many an insect has he deprived of its new-born young.' There is some truth in such ratiocina-

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tion no doubt. What am I doing myself, at this moment. Writing by candlelight, and the bugs and millers, (to say nothing of the buzzing, disgusting beetles, who bump their heads against the wall) bother me so much, getting into the eyes, into the nose, and into the mouth, that the paper on which this is scrawled is full of victims. In one corner lies Mosquito at full length, hammered flat with a blow of the fist, with his long antlers stretched out, and his tune arrested in the midst: in another Mr. Miller is laid out dead. I have killed an hundred organisms more ingenious than any Yankee clock in as many seconds, while others have committed suicide by flying into the flame. So might the hawk, if as wise as the owl, pounce upon me in argument, and say, 'This is all right. It is the way of the world.' But I was sorry that this particular robin should mourn the tragic fate of its young, and I will tell you why. The other day he did what no other adult robin ever did in my knowledge, and caused a singular portent or omen to occur. He hopped upon the shoulder of a good boy, standing upon the lawn, and for five minutes sang a song in his very ear. 'Oh!' said the little boy, who stood as still as a piece of sculpture, and scarcely breathed, 'it was so sweet! it was so musical!' Perhaps it might have been to

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thank the family for the protection afforded to his nest, and for the veto on percussion guns, and for the largess of daily crumbs. He seemed to say, 'My family are now fledged, and in a few days will go to seek their fortune in the world. In another year, when they become parents themselves, they will build their nests upon the self-same bough. Thanks, kind people! Until another blooming spring farewell!'

I have received a letter with this impertinent query, 'At what time in the afternoon do you breakfast?' I do not breakfast in the afternoon. I am out to 'meet the sun upon the upland lawn,' to look upon the jeweled blades. Sometimes I oversleep myself (the other day by four hours) over the usual time, for the want of a Yankee clock, but the next morning balanced the books, and made the equation right by a mistake the opposite way. My watch is out of order, having been running four years without tinkering or quackery, which is longer than the human system keeps a-going without medicine in these dyspeptic times. My watch *lies* under my pillow, (tick upon *tick*, or at least it did the other day, for when I drew it out, it was half-past ten o'clock. I sprang up in hot haste, swallowed hot coffee, and had the breakfast swept away with the same rapidity that

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some people dispatch dinner. In an hour after I sent over to the neighbours to compare time, and lo! it was half-past five o'clock, and a pleasant morning! My time-piece had stopped, and the hands still pointed to half-past ten. The Yankees make brass clocks which are sold for one dollar, and not 'poor pay poor preach' either, for they 'lectur'' upon time with all truth and propriety, and are an active example of 'good works.' Will not the Yankees make a piano at the same price, which will play as well as their watches work? They cannot do it. This I only say by way of throwing out the gauntlet and challenging them to try, for if they can invent a machine for a dollar to keep time, that is the most important part of music.

I have been much amused in observing the action of one or two patent churns to go by 'dog-power.' They work extremely well. Nothing short of a horse, as you know, is taken into account as a unit in the admeasurement of the mighty strength dispensed by steam. We say an engine of so many horse-power. Still, dog-strength is considerable, and although it would not move a gigantic engine, it will suffice for a machine. We make a distinction betwixt an engine and a machine. The one shows ingenuity, the other power and ingenuity com-

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bined. A dog has excellent lungs, full of breath. Observe CARLO, or PONTO, or NEP, or BOSE, (or whatever your dog's name is,) when you ride out You may drive at full speed, like my friend SMITH, over a plank-road—for SMITH always drives fast—but the dog which accompanies the horses goes ten times as far, now jumping up as if to catch them by the lip, then running a quarter of a mile ahead after butterflies or swallows, and returning again; now taking a zig-zag course from one side to the other of the road, and finding time to swim streams and fight a dozen battles by the way; yet always fetching up with the carriage moderately panting, and with only a few crystal drops distilling from the end of his tongue. Observing these traits of endurance, the Yankee, the ingenious Yankee, devoted his attention to the application of dog-power. The horse, placed on a vile treading-mill to get the chaff out of wheat, is inadequate to the task: his eyes bulge out of his head, and he soon becomes blind and dies; but a man of common acuteness could see that the dog was the very animal to accomplish this kind of work. Hence we date the origin of churning-machines to go by dog-power. They have accomplished a perfect triumph; and those who have large dairies candidly confess that they could not do without them

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I lately saw a dog in the course of training, and at first he evidently did not like it. He held back, refused to step, and was nearly choked by the collar. But with a good deal of coaxing he was prevailed on to make the machine churn a little. The other dog, whom I have in my eye, for the mort part *loved* to churn. At times he would skulk away when he felt unwell or lazy, but he would frequently of his own accord come and jump upon the mill, and set it a-going an hour at a time, of his own free choice, with no collar about his neck, when he could jump off at any moment, and making the meanwhile the goldenest and best butter in Dutchess county. The master of this dog has placed a carpet on the rim of the wheel, to prevent his feet from becoming sore—a wise and humane precaution. I do not know when I was more gratified than to see him the other day orderly stepping it off over the carpeted circumference, hanging his tongue out, it is true, and casting side-long glances of the meekest kind, but persevering with a noble ambition toward the great work of making good butter. It was a devotion of his dog-powers alike beautiful and sublime, as far as beauty and sublimity can be applied to the dairy.

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TWENTIETH.—This morning the Shanghai hen laid another egg, of a rich brunette complexion, which we took away, and replaced by a common vulgar egg, intending to reserve the Shanghai's in a cool place until the time of incubation. Very much amused was I with the sequel. The proud and haughty superiority of the breed manifested itself by detecting the cheat and resenting the insult. SHANG and ENG flew at the supposititious egg with the utmost indignation and picked it to pieces, scratching the remnants of the shell from the nest. I am now very much afraid lest Mrs. ENG should 'steal a nest,' and set upon a parcel of eggs spoiled by the intense heat. But as she understands the philosophy of hatching better than I, perhaps she will make it all right. I must take the hint conveyed by the severe reproof of the broken shell, and remove no more eggs. There is one peculiarity of these fowls which deserves to be mentioned. When I removed mine from the basket, I thought that the worthy donor had clipped their wings to prevent them from flying away, or scaling the hennery. On farther knowledge I have learned that their style and fashion is that of the jacket sleeve and bob-tail coat. Their eminent domesticity is clearly signified by this, because they cannot get over an ordinary fence, and would not if

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they could. It is because they have no disposition to do this, that Nature has cropt them of their superfluous wings, and given them a plumage suitable to their desires. 'Their sober wishes never learn to stray.' They often come into the kitchen, but never go abroad to associate with common fowls, but remain at home in dignified retirement. Another thing remarkable and quite renowned about this breed is, the oriental courtesy and politeness of the cock. If you throw a piece of bread, he waits till the hen helps herself first, and often carries it to her in his own beak. The feathered people in the east, and those *not* feathered, are far superior to ours in those elaborate and delightful forms of manner which add a charm and zest to life. This has been from the days of ABRAHAM until now. There are no common people in those realms. All are polite, and the very roosters illustrate the best principles laid down in any book of etiquette. *Book of Etiquette!* What is conventionalism without the in-born sense! Can any man or beast be taught to be mechanically polite? Not at all: not at all!

As this letter is all about birds, although not written with a quill, but with an abominable steel pen, of which the right-hand nib is worn out, I must tell you that the swallows' nest has fallen down the

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chimney full of young birds. I have just looked at them through the round hole in which the stove-pipe goes. They are very pretty, and as lively as young kittens, picking one another's feathers and scrambling over each other with much twittering and noise. The parent swallows come down chimney twenty times a day to give them food. I could not help contrasting their position at the bottom of such a dark cell with the gay and joyous life to which they are destined to emerge, feeding like the chameleon on blue ether, and glancing along the valleys with the rapidity of an electric flash. What gladness! what vivacity! what energy of the principle of life! Sitting on the porch, when my own brain is dull and apoplectic, and no pleasant dreams come athwart it, I often envy the sailing swallows, and this may account for a dream of flying experienced in my night-slumbers at least fifty times. The wings are indeed furnished by imagination, but with a glorious, triumphant motion 'I mount, I fly:' and the sensation, the thought, is as actual, as perfectly realized, as if awake. What does this mean? The recurrence of the dream so often, instigates me to reflection, and compels me to think that it *has* signification. It tells me that the birds which fly so fleetly are but an emblem of the spirit's exhilarating speed when it shall

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have shuffled off this mortal coil; that what is thus anticipated shall come to pass, and that the soul shall fly from realms to realms of beauty, for ever and for ever. How cheering and consolatory is this lesson, in which we are instructed by the birds!

I am occasionally annoyed by the filthy, nauseous, and disgusting bats. One of these got in the room the other night, and was very agitated, nervously dodging and seeking the door, which, like the entrance of a cavern, opened on the abyss of night. First I attacked him with a broom-stick, and then knocked him down with a cane, because I was afraid that he would get in my hair. Also I am annoyed by the little owls: likewise by the wasps. Last summer a little owl roosted on a pear-tree before my door, and ulalooed in a manner to silence the very wolves. I could not stand it, and took the trouble to dress myself and go down and throw a stone at him. He acknowledged the hint without waiting long to see what virtue there is in stones, and flitted off to the tree under my neighbor's window, where he quavered away all night with his deplorable ululations. He was one of those bullety little fellows who make a clicking, wooden noise with their bills, like the sound of Spanish castanets, and whose gray ears stick out at the side of their heads, and with

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eyes as rotund as a wild grape. I heartily wished that he was in BARNUM's Museum. I used to be amused with the owl who is perched on the mantelpiece of your study. I thought that he was good for an emblem, and that was all which he *was* good for. He looked as grave as a Doctor of Divinity, or a Professor of the dead languages. And how very deep and unfathomable appeared his thought—'deeper than plummet ever sounded.' Do you not ask him questions? Do you not go to him for advice? Depend on it, he has more wisdom than he knows what to do with, and might be an interpreter of hieroglyphics. But this epistle is too long. Time flies as well as bats. The shades of evening begin to descend, and, as VIRGIL says in his Eclogue, the mountains throw a lengthened shadow. Good evening!

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IV.

August 15th.

THE drought during the present season has been severe, and has joined in an offensive league with grass-hoppers and potato-bugs to produce a diminution of the crops. When my lawn was shaved a month or two ago, notwithstanding the expensiveness of hay, I reserved a single stack, and forbade it to be stored away, because I had not a sofa in the house. There I found it agreeable to lie every evening for a half hour or so during the month of July, looking up at the stars, listening to the music of the spheres, and the more palpable sound of a feminine

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voice, crying, 'Get up this instant!—come into the house!' But I disregarded the feminine voice, and paid attention to the celestial melody This is the way to look at the heavens above you, O my friend! and losing sight of things terrene, to hang as if suspended in the middle of the concave vault, as though your eye were central among the orbs, and yourself were at the Delphi of the Universe. How much companionship and study in the stars! Nor can I wonder at TYCHO BRACHE, who spent so many years in cold and solitary spots to hold communion with them; to welcome each new planet born to human sight, and give his shining protege a name; to follow in the burning track of comets, and be with the constellations even like

> 'BRIGHT PHOEBUS, shepherd of the night,
> Tending his flock of stars.'

Astrology is not dead yet, and horoscopes are not yet banished. Oh! how untimely and discrepant is the tinkling sound which calls from meditations such as these to come and drink a cup of tea. A couch like this, scented with clover and verbena, with the heavens for a dome and the night-dews for a diadem, is better than VICTORIA's throne. Yet I have known the same to be despised by an ungrateful beggar, who told me that he had not slept a wink the night

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before because the smell of the new-mown hay was so strong. I gave that beggar a bowl of ambrosial tea, and he would not drink it, but he requested coffee. I threw the tea away, and gave him coffee. He blew it in hot waves from the rim with his pouting mouth, shook his head, and then worried it down to the extremest dregs. He crooked his forefinger, and told the girl to make him another bowl. She refused to do it, but I told her to go into the cellar and set the mill a-going; that may-be he was an angel come upon us unawares, although he looked like an angel in distress. He swallowed the contents of the second bowl, and said, 'They not know how to make coffee in this countree;' but presently he stroked his stomach leniently, and remarked, 'Now I feel petter.' Then he went on to complain of the new-mown hay. But the new-mown hay is a couch for a king to lie on, although my little stack, which was soft and ample a month ago has melted down to a mere handful, and the dews of the night have become too chilling.

Corn-husking is a merry festival, but the harvesting of the hay arouses all the sylvan sympathies, and puts you in a pleasant mood. There is a rich broad mead before my door, and its distant edges undulate in shadowy coves, over which the mountain

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with its waving woods casts a deep shadow. Now it is shorn as neat and trim as the beard of any popinjay. In the burning noontide, from day to day, I watched the measured motion of the reaper's arms, the heads and spears of the clover and tall grasses as they fell in regular ranks before the whetted scythes, and the tossing it on bright tines, and turning it to be cured by the sun and air. This is clean work, suited alike for patriarchs or boys, and truly to be envied in a cloudy day, or when the sun sinks low. Then have I marked the transfer of the conic heaps into the arms of the lofty man upon the loaded cart, the animated dialogue and witty rejoinders between the workers on the ground and him in air, as he packs down the fragrant masses beneath his feet, and the pleasant pilgrimage from heap to heap. There is a strength and grandeur in the patient ox, exciting admiration and almost love, beside a well-considered keeping betwixt himself and equipage. How do his great utility and the cumbrous bulky masses which he has to draw; his elephantine movement and clumsy grace; the plain but outspread horns surmounting his expansive forehead, and his big, liquid eye, accord with the unwieldy cart, with the burdensome yoke which bows his thick neck and spinal column to the ground, and

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with the long goad which draws forth a hollow sound as it is brought down with remorseless violence upon the frontal bones! And then the vocabulary, which he understands so well, composed of a few roots of Hebraic simplicity:—'Haw! Buck! Gee haw! Come around! I tell yer to haw now!'

The author of the 'Babylonish Ditty,' a cunning and melodious set of versicles, came here to spend a Sunday in the country. He is a man of business, but he does not talk of stocks over his meals, nor sleep with a ledger under his pillow; but he intermingles the counting-house and the Academy, and gathers time to pick a flower by the wayside, to play a tune on the guitar, or to throw off with facile hand at just and dexterous intervals some little balmy poem such as the occasion may require. It was three by St. Paul's clock when we started off together, attended to the depot by a witty body-guard, and passing through the reeking streets over as many husks of corn as would have fed a thousand prodigals, and cobs enough to have treated all the pigs of Cincinnati, radishes for which there was no market, and the exfoliations of wilted cabbages, the whole leaguing together in a grand compound smell which would have made the town of Cologne jealous, we emerged presently, with a great roaring,

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rattling sound, to an expansive view of the Hudson river. When I lived in the town there were, as COLERIDGE has it, so many 'well-defined' odours in my neighbourhood, that I gave each of them a name in honour of the Common Council. That which proceeded from where the old he-goat used to sit on the steps in Greenwich-Avenue, I used to call Odoriffe; and that where the pig-pens and distilleries joined in a powerful compact I christened 'Big Tom,' and so on with the rest; and every morning I used to be regularly saluted by them all. In the month of August they acted on the offensive, and drove me out of town, where now and then you might still encounter a wafted and struggling essence come out on a visit to 'Bone-boiling Terrace,' to form a matrimonial alliance with Quintessence. But oh! how pleasant, after the company of Odoriffe, Big Tom, and all that troop, the amicable jostling of daffodil and lily, eglantine and wild roses, sweet clover, and new-mown hay! When from the cemetery of unburied cats, mephitic deleterious gases, and miasms of the gutter, you come upon rivulets of fresh air, the perfumed streaks which intersect the aerial flood, the light zephyrs which have cooled their wings in the broad waters of the Hudson, and the delicious jets out-gushing from the caves of classic

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Kaatskill, the contracted lungs swell out with greedy suction, and in the first prickling sensation of the invigorating draught, you sneeze tremendously with delight. How does the thickened blood roll back in ruddier globules from the heart upon the sallow cheek, with an erubescence like that of a timid maid, when the aromatic breeezes are borne from recesses on the river's brink, from the wild spots, sweet hollows, coves, and knolls, which bloom at every season, with the violet, the butter-cup, the liver-wort, the azalia, the blue gentian, and the rose —enough to make a botanist hold up his hands with glee:

> 'I KNOW a bank whereon the wild thyme grows,
> Where cowslip and the nodding violet blows.'

But I shall be getting into the realm of thin sentiment among the CHLOES, PHILLISES, DAMONS, and pastoral personages, and Della-Cruscan shades.

When arrived at nightfall at my own door, I called to FLORA, with a most mitigating suavity of the liquids and vowel sounds: 'FEL—O—O—O—ER—AH! has any one called here since I have been gone? Are there any letters or papers? Are the chickens well?' A—yes, Sir; the hen has left her chickens and gone to setting!' 'Good! good! let her not be

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disturbed. Is there any cream in the house?' 'A—no, Sir.' 'Are there any eggs?' 'A—no, Sir.' Is there any ham?' 'A—no, Sir.' 'Are there any radishes in the garden?' 'A—no, Sir.' 'Are there any tomatoes?' 'A—no, Sir.' 'Is there any bread?' 'A—no, Sir.' 'Then go over to the neighbours and get them, and put the kettle on, and let's have tea.' In a short time the desired meal was accomplished, and the Babylonian put his little boy to bed, for he was drowsy in the extreme. The Sabbath dawned, and it was like all the Sundays ever described in print, 'so cool, so calm, so bright, the bridal of the earth and sky.' The little stream which rolls at the mountain's base before the door, was roughened by a susurring breeze into crisp waves sparkling in the brightness of the sun. The sound of the church-going bell was heard afar off. The author of the 'Babylonish Ditty' came down attired in a pair of cool, well-ironed breeches, white stockings, and patent leather shoes, and his little boy in a ditto style, with elegant ruffles on his shirt, and with a variegated ribbon around his throat. My friend has his place of business in the city, not far from where the naughty Wall-street debouches with its tide of worldliness against the buttresses of Trinity Church, and then falls back to mingle with the current in

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the Broadway, and he said it was very grateful to him to have his religious sensibilities excited among the sequestered scenes of nature on a Sunday. Then, as he walked along, with a sharp pen-knife cutting a scimetar out of a shingle for his little boy, he remarked on the vanity of town-worshippers; of the crowd of gilded carriages before churches whose inmates were listening to some 'crack preacher;' of the number of young men who stood sucking their cane in the porticoes, and staring at ladies; of the well-dressed and fat dinners afterward partaken, and lethargic slumbers indulged. 'How many worship GOD,' said he, 'in sincerity and truth, of all the multitudes who keep holy-day?' When he had done cutting his townsmen and the shingle, we drew near the antique church. It is in a thick grove of locusts, and built long before the Revolution, and its interior arrangements are extremely quaint, especially the pulpit, where the very worthy minister holds forth.

The service always held in it is after the model of the Church of England. C— asked with some apprehension if a long sermon might be expected; but on the present occasion it happened that there was no sermon at all. They had been pulling down the worm-eaten tower, and the people were dispersing to their homes as we arrived. The excuse

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alleged was, that the strong smell of the bats made the ladies sick. Some had already adjourned to the neighbouring Dutch church, where HARVEY BIRCH, a character who figures largely in COOPER'S novel, 'The Spy,' was formerly confined. We found the whole porch covered with rubbish, consisting of old nails, decayed shingles, rafters gnawed to a thin and ragged edge like crusts of bread, the mummies of deceased bats, their thin vampire, black-ribbed wings, so different from the rich and sun-lit plumage of cherubs, sticking to the old boards.

Into what deeper, blacker Erebus can bat-spirits go than the moonless nights into which they delight to flit with jerking rapidity! From the eaves and accidental loop-holes of this antique, sacred tower, which they had profaned for a hundred years, these obscene birds were now turned out in one filthy flock into the open day. Many of them went right smack into the golden sun, and fell stone dead on the graves of revolutionary and holy men. Others clutched the branches of old trees in the thickest gloom of the mountain woods, and when night drew on swarmed about the neigbouring garrets, to the great dismay of long-haired women, diving into the windows of unlit chambers, or any blacker cavern than the surrounding night. The unfledged batlings

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tumbled down at the base into the midst of timbers and ancient rubbish, and now there was a cry of alarm, an exclamation of surprise among the small conclave who remained about the church, as if some wonder had been brought to light. The wardens and vestrymen who were holding a council in the middle of the road, as they looked up through the trees to the place where the lamented tower had stood, with some respect to plans of rebuilding, and whether they should call in the aid of UPJOHN, and what kind of cornice would afford the most relief in this architectural distress, when, lo! it was proclaimed that they were overrun with—chintzes, shall I say? no—with bed-bugs! harbored among the penurious feathers of the birds of night. This obloquy also attaches to the cooing pigeons and to the dear doves. But a council of investigation, on putting their heads down closely to the decayed beams, decided that the bugs by which they were over-crawled were of a different kind. The fair sex however, would not rely on the opinion of the committee, and the kindling wood cannot be sold. They did not care what the warden said, or what the vestrymen thought: they would not admit the condemned timbers into their houses or at their hearths. Moreover, many have not been to church

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since. This is a valid excuse, and much better than that usually advanced by those who do not go to church on Sunday. For it must be confessed that the reigning piety of the day is of a very slim description. It is liable to colds, and is affected by catarrhs, is scared by a passing cloud, and invariably kept in-doors by a shower, but hastens thin-clad to a ball on Monday night, 'in thunder, lightning, or in rain.' But no one could wish his best friend to attend a church if he were sure that he was going to the bugs.

The fate of the old tower is much lamented. It was a picturesque object seen through the trees as you came down the hills into the suburbs. The landscape which it set off misses it very much, and the very eaves of the church which it has overlooked and overshadowed so long, drip sympathizing tears. Once it had a sightly steeple and a musically-sounding bell. But the steeple had an inclination that the centre of gravity should not fall within the base, which sealed its doom, and the bell was transferred to the near church of St. Harvey Birch, wherein the Dutch worship; and last of all, the tower came down, which was the crowning glory of the whole. Now the edifice presents a Quaker-plainness, but the quaint pulpit and sounding-board remain.

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The Babylonian was much grieved and disappointed at the loss of prayers and a sermon, and his little boy brandished his wooden sword in vindictive anger against the bats. In the afternoon, numbers of people came from a distance in carriages, but finding the place vacant, the tower prostrate, and the bat-odor enough to knock you down, they drew up in a sort of general levee before the parson's door. They wanted to know what was to be done in the emergency, how long the church was to remain closed, and whether the tower was to be rebuilt.

Thus was the sacred stillness of the day, so good for meditation, turned into buzz and bustle by profane birds, to admire which a naturalist must have the heart of a ghoul. When pinned to the surface of a board by their extended wings, they afford the most violent contrast which can be imagined to a butterfly or bird of paradise. Their flat heads, big mouths, big ears, ugly little sharp teeth, hideous expression, and offensive smell, fairly make one sicken with disgust. How angry they must have been to be turned out of the tower of which they held the lease for a hundred years, and paid the rent in gu ano ! When the workmen began to hammer against their hiding-places, they responded by the faintest pe wee mewings, like a nursery of Lilliputian cats

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Well, they are gone, and where they will again find such good quarters, I know not. Let them inquire of some very wise owl. Rents are high.

I meant to have said something about a Sunday in the country, but all this has been long ago charmingly sketched in CRAYON, and exhausted by a more practised hand. Suffice it, when the sun sank down, calm and contemplative we sat in chairs upon the river's bank. Heat-lightning flashed in the battlemented clouds, while vapours imbued by the risen moon rested in fantastic forms upon the mountain's crest: the waves sparkled and flashed, and the snowy sails glided by like shadows from the spirit-land.

TWENTY-FOURTH OF AUGUST.—To-day, at a beautiful seat on the Hudson, I saw a cherry-tree in full bearing. The fruit was as large as the Morello, and as agreeable to the palate as the English ox-heart. I plucked and ate a few, drawing a comparison very unfavorable to plums, which are now luscious and abundant, and vary in size from a pigeon's egg to a pear. Of peaches we mourn the almost total loss. The fruitless limbs bring back the memory of many an eager and a nipping air in the bleak months which killed the buds. The watering mouths now long for the red cheeks and somewhat (to me) indifferent pulp

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of the Melicatoon. Where are Eldorado, Lemon-Cling, and Lump-of-Gold, which whilom made the eyes to dance with joy? Oh! how precious was the fruitage! how inestimable the treasure on the bending, breaking, limbs! Nevertheless, of melons, musk or water, there is no lack. How does the one, like pine-apple, almost excoriate the palate; and how does the blood-red pulp of the other, so beautifully variegated with its black and chocolate-colored seeds, (cut it how you will,) awaken anticipation for the parched and feverish tongue! It is a gushing fruit, and when the cooling chunks are in the mouth, the mercury which is in the veins goes down to temperate heat. You do but press it gently beneath the palate, and that apparently solid substance which painters love to imitate has all vanished. It was but a mass of succulent and delicate veins and fibres filled with juice. This they say will be a good 'apple year,' and truly I am glad of it, for there is no fruit of which the loss is more severely felt. The taste never tires. All people are fond of a good apple. It is an interesting fruit from the very start. How enchanting is the orchard in the delicious season of early spring, when it is in full bloom! How pleasant at a later period to see the clean barrels stand beneath the trees ready to receive the crisp and crackling Newtown Pippin,

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and Rhode-Island Greening, verdant as the grass, the Russet, the Pearmain, the Lady apple, which is so dear, and whose modest cheeks blush as if at the frequent praises of its delicacy and excellence. The apple is the companion of the winter evening, associated with a cheerful room, a bright fire, a pleasant tale, SCOTT's novels or Arabian Nights. Perhaps it is nearly bed-time. Your eyes grow dim. You are fatigued with study, with chess, with checkers, with books; you sigh, you yawn, you stretch your arms above your head. All of a sudden a happy thought strikes you. BRING IN THE APPLES! It is like magic. The foot-lights go up, and the scene brightens.

I mean to have some crab-apple cider this winter, if any can be had. I am subject to occasional fits of jaundice, when my feelings are hurt, or I have no money. The liver gets torpid, the skin becomes yellow, the eyes suffused with a saffron hue, (*Difficili bile tumet jecur,*) and nothing but crab-apple cider goes to the right spot, or does me any good. I mean to freeze out the watery particles, bottle it up, put in a raisin, cork it, seal it, bury it, and draw it out as jaundice may require. Is there any harm in that? I should think not. I will say to a friend: 'Aha! now let me give you a taste of something which will make your eyes open:

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—something as delicate as ARIEL, and as fruity as was ever imprisoned in glassy walls ;—a pure juice, full of native flavor ;—and if you do not smack your lips, you are the incarnation of ingratitude.'

> 'OH for a vintage which hath been
> Cooled for a long age in the deep-delved earth !'

There is amber for you ! See the bubbles running races with each other to the beaded brim !—This is no sour trash, sugar-of-leaded, and pumped full of gases in a New Jersey cellar and labelled 'Heidseek.'—This is *Crab-Apple* Cider, O my friend !—Then he will taste it, while the widening ripples of approbation chase one another over his appreciating countenance, and you can see that he is much refreshed and recreated, and he will perhaps nod his head ominously, saying, 'If that be not good, call me horse, spit on me.' All hospitality is flat and ungenerous ; food, my friend, without some outward sign to represent the grace of welcome. The sign too must have a little of the warmth and spice of friendship testified. Mark that, for it accords with the established laws of genial, human nature. It is as old as Adam and Eve's eldest children. When your neighbours come to see you, they do not

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come to eat and drink mainly, but recollect, that the elements you offer, although they are just touched to the lips, are the outward emblems of kindness and hospitality ;—do not therefore according to the marvellous philosophy of the present day, be disposed to discard these emblems as of no value.—If the old side-board is abolished, have a care that good feeling and charity and kindness do not decay. You must have some regard for the composite nature of man, and not think that you are wise and that the old custom is a fool ;—for after all, old and civilized custom is in accordance with the laws of our being, and social state. From such reasoning as the above, more than for my own yellowness or jaundice, I will be provided with crab-apple cider in the fall. The crab is somewhat acid, but when expressed, the fluid is brisk, sparkling and refreshing. There is an apple-tree of an unknown kind behind my house, and ever and anon the apples fall with considerable violence and with a thumping sound upon the roof, roll down upon the piazza and thence to the ground. The other night they startled me in my bed, and I thought that the knocking spirits were on hand. I came down stairs to see that all was right, and being loth to re-

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turn again, sat down, seized a pen, spread ou
paper, and to this circumstance, the presen
long-winded, I fear uninteresting epistle is partl
due.

V

October, 1852.

WHEN my Shanghai began to lay eggs, I preserved them scrupulously as those of no common fowl, and placed them in a shallow earthen vessel to be ready for incubation. She sat upon fifteen, all moderately-sized, of a mulatto colour, and I expected fifteen chickens in the process of time. Great was my impatience, as the three weeks were nearly fulfilled, and I watched her upon the nest from day to day, most meekly and quietly brooding. One day,

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I gently lifted her, as she protested with subdued clucking, and counted only fourteen eggs. How was this? 'FEL–O–ER–AH! how many eggs did we place in this nest.'—'A–fifteen, sir.'—'Here are only fourteen: what has become of the other?'—'I do'-know, Sir.'—That was very strange, for who would rob a hen's nest when she was in the act of setting? In a few days after only thirteen remained, on which I suspected that some sly rat had watched his chance, and indulged his sucking propensity. But it presently appeared that this unnatural Shanghai picked them to pieces, and ate them. One morning, in consequence, she got desperately sick, and wandered into the thick weeds of the garden, poking her head among the currant-bushes and burdocks, where she remained for some hours until every egg became cold. The carpenters who were making the fence told me to take her by the legs and hold her head downward. I did so, stroking the feathers of her neck, when the egg leaked out of her throat. She was immediately well, and resumed sitting. It could not be expected, however, after such a misfortune, that any chickens should be produced.

One day after breakfast, FLORA came in with great eagerness, as I was sipping my second cup of Mocha, and said that the hen had a chicken. Sure

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enough, on going beneath the shed, I could hear its smothered chirp; and on raising the mother up, beheld the chick, as yet a little embarrassed by the shell, but quite large and lively, with yellow legs slightly feathered, and all the characteristics of the Shanghai breed. I went to my study to fold a few letters, and on returning still heard the cry. Made a pilgrimage to the garden, to get a cauliflower for dinner. When I came back, the voice of the chicken was no longer heard. Lifted up the hen, and found the little thing stone dead: took it up, examined it for a minute, and threw it on the straw. Pshaw!

When the next chicken was hatched, I went out to take it away to put it in a basket in the kitchen fireplace, and feed it 'out of hand,' and learned to my surprise that Shanghai had eaten it up! That the savage and irascible sow will devour squeaklings is a fact well known. That the hen, that very figure and illustration of maternal tenderness, is sometimes guilty of the same act, never before came to my knowledge. Out of fifteen eggs my Shanhai has only two chickens, who go tottling about, stumbling and bungling over the little hillocks: a small brood, and I am afraid that these will fall victims to casualty or a sly rat. It is very hard to be guarded with any certainty against a sly rat. He has a poking

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nose, a peeking eye, a ransacking smell, an inaudible foot-fall; and, added to all, a consummate unprincipled judgment. Before you know it, he has sucked your eggs, gnawed your hams, or emptied your oil-betty. Good rat-catchers are much wanted throughout Christendom.

Monday.—As I walked from the post-office, on the borders of the stubble-fields, and read papers by the way, an incident befel—not that I walked off a bridge, or saw my name in print; but happening to lift my eyes from the page and look up in the sun, I sneezed as if I had taken a pinch of rose-scented snuff. I know not how it is, but as I grow older I sneeze with redoubled violence, sometimes as if it would really tear me to pieces. Some people cannot make a noise in any other way; and one old gentleman of my acquaintance has a fit of this kind every Sunday morning in church, the whole fit including seven successive sneezes of the most violent kind. But this is not the incident. Scarcely had I sneezed, when a peal of puerile laughter broke upon my ear; and turning round, I beheld a small boy with blue eyes, having a little bundle and a Maltese kitten in his arms. 'Oh,' said he, 'when you

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sneezed, those pigs in the field ran as fast as they could go !'

The boy had such a happy face, was in such a chuckling mood, so free from care and so disposed to talk, that I folded up the mammoth sheets, so full of sarcasm and rebuke, to be edified as with the bright pictures of a primer or little book. Before advancing the length of a corn-field, he opened his budget—not the little bundle in which his worldly goods were enclosed within a cotton kerchief, but the budget of his history—and told me all things that ever he did : what was his name ; that his parents were dead ; that he was born in Hampshire ; that he was twelve years old ; that he could read ; that he had been to Sunday school ; that he was now out of place ; and that he was on a journey.

'How far are you going, my little man ?'

'To Rochester, Sir.'

'That is a great way for you to travel. How much money have you got ?'

'I've got a shilling,' said he, laughing with great glee ; 'I'm going to keep that till to-morrow, to buy my dinner with.'

'Yes ; but when you travel on the rail-road you must pay a dollar or two. What will you do ?'

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'O, I'll tell them that I want to go, and they'll let me.'

It was in vain that I could impress upon his apprehension that he was venturing far upon a little capital; for he soon burst into another fit of gay laughter, as he held up the kitten and changed the theme.

'What are you going to do with the kitten?' said I.

'Oh, I do as every body tells me: my mistress told me to take her a mile and let her go.'

Having now arrived at my own gate, I told him to let the Maltese loose, and she ran mewing along the garden-fence. When I caught her, and brought her into the kitchen, I found that she was blind. 'The world is generous,' thought I, 'to send a little boy on foot three hundred miles with a shilling in his pocket, and make him drop a blind kitten by the way.'

SUNDAY MORNING.—When the sun rose this morning, a white smoke, like that which uprises from the crucible of the alchemist, covered the whole earth; and as HOMEROS expresses it, you could see about as far as a stone's cast, supposing that the stone were not thrown from a sling. When to the tintinnabula

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tion of the breakfast-bell, inviting to appease a gentle appetite, (how different from the stunning gong which calls whole gangs to 'raven like a wolf!') when, as the volatile spirit of coffee came through the key-hole and brooded over the pillow, from which I awoke refreshed, I passed down the broad and polished oaken stair-case which adorns my friend's house on the banks of the Hudson, and stepped upon the piazza, all was a blank. Of the infinite beauties of Nature, which seemed to have taken the white veil, not one was visible, save a few blue morning-glories on the porch, on the hither edge of this vapory sea. Blue is a hopeful color, not properly the badge of dejection, nor to be worn in the button-hole of a jaundiced man. While the winter lingers, Blue-bird first carols on the unbudding bough; while the snow yet remains in patches, Violet ventures to peep out on the cheerless scene; while the clouds hesitate to depart the blue sky gives a little hope; blue eyes beam on you with the greatest tenderness; and so I thought when Morning-glory first greeted me on the dewy porch. Methinks that morning-glory has not received its meed of justice, O my friend! It is not enough bepainted in pictures, or celebrated in song: it is too often put off with a mere bean-pole for support, or with an

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ungainly stick ; discarded from porch, arbour, trellis, bower, net-work, floral temple, aerial garden-arch and architecture ; given up to the tender mercy and support of coarser plants ; yet it affords the best moral lesson among the flowers, for it shuts up early, without even a taste of mountain-dew, and you have never seen it blue at night.

At the hour of ten my friend's carriage was at the door ; a plain oblong box, without top, fit for the country ; painted of a subdued claret color, mounted upon springs, in which his plump and rosy children climbed, gleefully delighted to ride to church ; and as we took our seats, just then the powerful sun controlled the day ; while in many a graceful folding, looping and festooning, the misty curtain rose upon the enchanting scene. There in the foreground, at the base of that clean slope, grassy lawn, Hudson, river of rivers, rolled ; and as I stood on the piazza, with prayer-book in my hand, I noticed that, with respect to its width, it was, like ' All of Gaul,' divided into three parts. First, near the shore a great extended mirror, smooth, glassy ; then a roughened channel ; and opposite, beneath the impending, wood-crowned banks, a Stygian stream, full of *shadows*. It was Indian summer, (short-lived season !) belted betwixt sweltering heats and arctic

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ice and every hour of its golden days is blissful and balmier than balm—'from morn to noon, from noon till dewy eve,' all luxury and delight. Oh, the sun-rising out of that sea of silvery vapour, where one by one the mountain-tops reveal themselves in grandeur, surmounting pine and conic summit down to the expansive base, where runs the flashing rill; while all within the scooped-out hollows the mist still rolls in snowy gulfs, till the meridian splendour of the sun dispels the illusion! Oh! the blue hazy atmosphere tender as beams of the full-risen moon, softening those pictures of the earth which only eyes like CLAUDE's know how to fix and pencil down! And oh, the luxury of life on such a day—Sabbath of Sabbaths! The tinkling kine go down the vale, and all the pastoral picture satisfies the sense, while from the distant spire the 'bells—bells—bells!' come hovering on the air with sweeter melody!

Winding about the grassy slope we came into the woods, talking of TITUS LIVIUS—something turned the conversation that way—and passed through a rustic gate, whose hinges were of green withes, and pivoted upon a stump; master-piece of the farmer's art, the *extempore* composition of a half-hour, when his hatchet was unemployed in the woods. So ingeniously is it put together, that the elbows and

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crooked part of the wood seem to have been predestined, and to have grown up in their gnarled and knotted crookedness, for the express purpose of that gate. If I had an eye, I would draw it upon this paper, as a very pleasing object to look upon; for when in the course of taking a ride you are interrupted by such a gate, it well repays for the trouble of opening and shutting, to find the tokens of talent and artistic skill. That is a charming ride through those woods in the spring, when the sassafras, the birch, and all the aromatic woods are bursting their plump buds, and when the tender grape gives a good smell. It is so in the midsummer. Coolness resides in those deep dells; hollows scooped out, where, as you look down by the way, you must drop a plummet very deep before it would reach the tops of the lofty oaks, or sink among the thick green foliage of the trees. The oak throws its over-mastering arms above you, and exhibits its crown beneath. These are the snuggest nestling spots for birds. Here the gray squirrel throws his ornamental tail above his back, or picks a hazel-nut with delicate grace; and the mischievous blue-jay dives into the thickest shades with a sharp scream, that guilty bird!

Riding on that pleasant Sunday morning, as pres-

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ently we passed beneath a canopy of chestnut boughs, we heard again the tinkling water-brooks and Sunday bells. The mountains which gird us in on every hand are now changing their foliage from the many varieties of green, which belong to spring and summer, to the triumphal colours which mark the spanning rainbow or the setting sun. Among all the trees the pepperidge now distinguishes itself even beyond the maple for its superb tints. The intermingling of purple with the yet green tops of the locust-groves is indescribably rich, or with the orange-yellow of the oak, around which the American ivy is entwined, or hangs in festoons upon the fences; and wherever the eye turns, the display of rainbow colours is seen on every hand. But you must travel farther north to see the pomp of the dying year. Do you remember that 'Ride through the Gulf,' written by CAROLUS BROOKS? It is a sumptuous account.

At this season, so voluptuous in its softness, some apple, plum, peach, and pear trees venture to bloom anew. I have sometimes found the ripe strawberry in the open air. 'Doubtless GOD might have made a better berry,' says an old writer, 'but he never did;' and so I thought when taking a last leave in the fall of the exquisite flavor of that fruit of fruits

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I made a basket of the dry husks of corn, placed therein a handful gathered with patient industry among the red and decaying leaves. Now also do the grapes abound. Isabella and Catawba vie in purple blush, but Scuppernong is too effeminate for the cold North. Not long ago I walked under a glassy dome, with the most glorious clusters above my head, transparent to the very heart, and bursting their tender skins with juice. A rill of great transparency really oozed from the corners of my mouth; and as the generous host gave me by the stem a full-grown bunch, I ate them with a feeling of self-reproach. How many a sick and parched mouth would have been revived by what I wantonly ate up with the most abandoned luxury! These are for the tables of the rich; but the time is coming when the vine-clad hills shall be a feature in the glorious land, and the vintage a festive season to the sons of toil. Then shall Nature perfect the convulsive effort to alleviate a mighty wrong. Bacchus and Ceres shall be made friends. But what are those golden balls in yonder stubble-field, among the standing stacks of corn? Pumpkins my friend. Of these the crop is plentiful and good and though I do not like the ordinary pumpkin-pie, far be it from me to rejoice not in the prospects of

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those who do. It is the height of folly to set up your own taste as a standard for the world. Never did this crop more dot the fields; and I can assure you, that it is a sight at least to feast the eye where you behold the distant slope all covered with the auriferous fruit of this vine; while I can anticipate in my heart the full sentiment of a New England Thanksgiving.

We must make the most of mid-summer, the most of Indian summer, the most of splendid October; for with the fall of the leaf the pastoral feeling will subside, and it is hard to write an Idyl by a stove. But now, as I pass through the woods, or explore the bottom of dells like the aforesaid, I can with my whole heart draw out the ivory tablets, silver-clasped, which you gave me, what time we wandered into BONFANTI'S on a pleasant day, and sitting down on some stump, some rock, some bank, where the living waters gush, endeavor to transcribe a little of the feeling which I had in full force when, a boy, I read THEOCRITUS and MOSCHUS, and, when a man, I revelled in sweet WILLIAM'S Midsummer Night's Dream. Virgilius, in his Eclogues, could never stir up in me rich sylvan sympathies, or lull me in a dream. In vain did he talk of cheese and chestnuts, fleeces and kine. I

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never could hear the bells tinkle on his herds. Eclogue is not Idyl. He does well by *pius* Æneas, but not quite so well by Corydon, and Damæas, and Tytyrus, and all that set Only one line still tarries on remembrance, and comes up involuntarily on the tongue :

'Tytyre dum redeo, brevis est via, pasce capellas.'

I saw something in the woods to-day which struck me sentimentally : is it worth mentioning ?—a dead catydid at the bottom of a clear spring. Numbed by the frosty night, from a sublime height he fell into this glassy sarcophagus, where his green body was laid out on little white pebbles, swathed in lymph, fit sepulchre for a nightingale or a catydid. When you hear the hoarse cicada sing in the sweltering heats of August, soon after look for temperate nights ; and by the time the lightning bugs have ceased to twinkle on the mead, and casual glow-worms shine with a dull lustre in the path, you may expect the welcome music of the catydids, who love to congregate in the willow-groves, ever repeating that mournful story of the broken bottle ; and the rule is, that when the first frosts whiten the earth they hush their song. We had some nipping nights not long ago, and sat in the cheerless rooms with a mournful feeling of the decaying year. But again

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the windows and doors are flung wide open in the heavenly nights; round as young NORVAL'S shield the full moon rides aloft, and feebly and in fewer numbers the catydids resume their song.

Give me any music but the mosquito's roundelay, say I. I have watched them on my hand until their bodies became little red globules, like the bottles in the windows of an apothecary's shop. After observing curiously for some time the play of their delicate antlers and white speckled legs, like the State-prisoners' breeches at Sing-Sing, you would hardly kill one of these more than you would your own child, because he has your own blood in his veins. We have hardly been bothered with a mosquito among these mountains this summer; but when I staid in town the other night, only one of these tormentors interrupted the rest of a tired man. I laid my deliberate plan to deprive him of life, indulging him for a long time in his far-away hummings, his flights to the ceiling and return, his circling movements overhead, his tipping touches and retreat, until the moment should come for a fair, well-ordered slap, which should stop his music for the night. But amiable humor was well-nigh worried out in waiting for revenge. Now he alighted on my knuckle, now on my finger's end just outside

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the nail, on the eye-lid, on the lip, on the lappet of the ear, till last of all, he ventured to apply his sucking apparatus to a cheek somewhat pale, and ill supplied with blood. Then did I slap my face as it had not been slapped since puerile days. 'Have you killed him?' 'I have,' replied I, speaking to myself, and forthwith, satisfied with the exploit, fell into a tranquil sleep, dreaming of woods, and fields, and water-brooks, and pleasant scenes

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VI.

October, 1852.

Returned from the city the other evening, taking the five o'clock train. It was dismal, cold, dripping weather; the windows of the cars were obscured with drops, and when it became pitch-dark, my heart was almost broken. As we passed under the stone bridges, the clatter was enough to drive a nervous man out of his wits. The annoy-

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ance of the wet conductors continually demanding your ticket, for which you are obliged to hunt in all your pockets, is excessive. Some people insert their tickets under the rim of their hats. The custom is good on the score of convenience, but it is not pleasant to be thus placarded. When we stopped opposite Newburgh, a 'city set on an hill,' the lights in the factories and mansions shone with a picturesque effect. There I got out, while the mist was chilling in the extreme, and it was as dark as pitch. A long row of soiled carriages stood stuck in the mud. I fumbled my way to the end of a long, nar row platform about a quarter of a mile, to search for my trunk, which was buried up amidst a multitude of trunks, and found it with difficulty. Rode five or six miles in company of five or six 'damp strangers,' and alighted at last at my own door. The house was shut up, and like the 'halls of Balclutha, it was desolate.' After stumbling over chairs, I managed to find a Lucifer match, and drawing it in a long lucid train, like that of a comet, over the kitchen wall, it oozed out at last in a blue flower of sulphurous flame, and, feebly simmering, went out. Struck another on the stove-pipe with better success. The cheerlessness of the vacant mansion was made apparent. 'FEL—O—ERAH!'

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I cried with tender reminiscence. This leads one to mention a sketch or two of domestic adventure.

FLORA.

We had dismissed our little servant-maid before departing. The fiat had gone forth against her: she was not available in household affairs. 'FEL-O-O-ERAH,' I said, 'you must leave us. You are a good girl, but you are too young. Pack your chest, and when the coach arrives be ready to go with me. You have had a month's warning.' But FELORA continued sedulously employed in the washing of dishes, and neglected the packing of the trunk. 'FELO-ERAH, are you ready?'

'A-no, Sir.' 'Well, there is not a half-hour to spare. Go up stairs immediately and be ready.' But the little maid became disobedient; she moped weeping in the chimney-corner among the pot-hooks, raking the ashes. 'What are you about, child?'

She was the first servant we ever had, and the labour was not hard, and she had been gently entreated. For it is sometimes disgusting in a household to behold the severity of exaction from a poor little servant-of-all-work. When you have your butler and

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your baker, your pastry-cook, your chamber-maid, your coachman, your footman, your fat and well-fed menials, who keep high-life below stairs, and waste much substance, have a sharp eye on them in this republican country, and see to it that they do enough. Otherwise they will insult you in your own domicile, and shake a cow-hide over your head. They will have the arrogance to speak good English in your presence, and to vie with you in the choicest phrases of which the language admits. Crop this impudence in the bud.

At the same time, if you have only one poor little maid-servant, do not imagine that she is butler, baker, house-keeper, cook, chamber-maid, coachman, footman; and that you can set up to live in style. Learn to wait a little on yourself, if you cannot *pay* for being waited upon. Shut up your windows at night, and black your own boots in the morning. Go frequently upon your own errands. Open the door yourself when the bell rings, that those outside may not stand for ten minutes while they hear a voice within imperiously from the stair-landing summoning the poor little maid-servant from the garret or from the 'cellar kitchen' 'to go and see who is there.' She receives little, and then

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she is ordered about from sun-rise till late at night to do this and to do that; to go here and to go there; to lift heavy weights and draw heavy burdens; to run up stairs and to hurry into the cellar; to go over to the next neighbor's; to bring a pitcher of water, another, another, another, another, another! if it be hot weather; to wash, and to iron, and to cook; and to break her little heart in attempting to do all things, and to be remunerated with nothing but sour looks and a severe scolding

'FEL-O-E-RAH, are you ready? The coach is coming.' 'A-yes, Sir;' and she comes down the steep garret-stairs holding in her arms a little box containing her worldly goods; her tidy bonnet is fastened by a blue ribbon beneath her chin, and her pretty English cheeks red with weeping. FLORA almost positively refused to go, but stopped on this side of actual disobedience, and submission when it did come came like a virtue, and caused me to feel like turning a suppliant out of doors. FLORENCHA (that was her name) went to take her last look at the chickens. She had fed my Shanghais with singular ability, but alas! she was not endued by nature with mental qualifications, which was no fault of the poor

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child's; nor was her memory tenacious of instruction. I returned her in safety to the paternal roof.

When I returned to my own vacant house on the aforesaid rainy night, my heart almost smote me. There was a tender pathos in the silent kitchen: the disposition of all things gave indication of a hasty departure; it was a reminiscence of FLORENCHA: the night-lamp crusted with a sooty crown; the parti-colored beans arranged upon a board on a barrel; the expressive broom standing in a corner; the Indian meal in a saucer—last *meal* given to the Shanghai chickens! The stove-pipe looked very black, and the stove very cold and dismal. And there on the mantle-piece was the forgotten prayer-book, forgotten in the hurry of departure, with a leaf turned down at the catechism. Every Sunday evening I used to say, (she was a mere child,) 'FEL-O-o-E-RAH, have you learned your lesson? 'A—yes, Sir.' 'Let me hear you. What is your name?' 'N. or M.' 'Oh no, what is your Christian name? 'FLORA FAIRCHILD.' 'Yes, FAIRCHILD is your parents' name; what name was given to you in baptism?' 'FLORENCHA.' 'That is right. FEL-O-o-o-ER-RE-E-EN-CHA! now tell me,' etc.

To return to a dark, and dead, and desolate abode,

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is like going into the chambers of Herculaneum and Pompeii. In the hurry of events and refreshing influence of a change of scene, you have taken no note of time since your departure, and on returning home you feel as if you had been gone a long time.

I went into my study—my library, if the room is worthy to be called by such a name—and after the rasping of innumerable matches against a piece of rough paper, and (that proving of no avail) on the sole of my boot, managed to ignite the study-lamp. It would not burn until I had trimmed the wick and poured water into it, which sank duly to the bottom, the oil-wave coming uppermost. Then the room became a little cheerful, and the gilded superscription of the books on the shelves visible. The names of RABELAIS, SWIFT, STERNE, SHAKSPEARE, CHARLES LAMB, and others, glared out. My pipe lay upon the table, containing still a smokable pinch of Scarfalatti. For comfort sake I put it into my mouth and smoked it. My pen lay where I had left it, rusted down on the mahogany board, and a little thick ink remained in the font. I took it up and wrote with it as if it had been a relic of by-gone ages. Over the table hung a fine, almost invisible silken thread, at the end of which, betwixt me and the lamp, was suspended a little spider, who with nautical endeavor began to

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climb. With my thumb and fore-finger I broke the thread asunder, and snapped the spider on the floor. I never like to crush a spider, nor to clear away with the besom of destruction the net-work which he has woven in the room-corners. It is a trap for the nauseous and disgusting fly, for the spiteful and vindictive hornet. When you have innocently laid your hand on some book or cushion, and have been stung by one of these, how gratifying to see him presently entangled in a web, while the agile little insect comes down the ropes, and with his delicate fingers winds him round and round, and pinions his arms, struggle as he will!

THE VALETUDINARIAN.

'M——,' I said, 'I have brought you to a cold, dreary house!' I must tell you that I had been fool enough to bring a friend to my house, and he an invalid man. Sitting in the cars I espied him, and with a devilish selfishness said, 'I will have that man to share with me the dreariness of this cold and misty night.' I walked up to him, and tapped him on the shoulder. 'Ah!' said he,

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'Come,' said I, in a chirping tone of concealed hypocrisy, 'and make my house your home. There is nobdody there, but we will have a good time of it. You are going to the Point. Never mind, come with me.' In a moment of delusion the infatuated man agreed. After we had conversed for a few minutes in the study we began to feel cold. 'Now,' said I, we must have a rousing fire, and a cup of hot tea: that will make us feel better. Excuse me for a moment: amuse yourself till I return. I will step over and ask PALMER to come and kindle a good fire, and help me along. All will be right.' 'Well,' said he. Palmer is my right-hand man. There is an old farm-house about fifty yards off. It used to be a tavern in the Revolutionary War. It has settled a good deal within the last hundred years; that is to say, the walls, the floors, and the beams are sunken very much from the horizontal line observable in the floor of a bowling alley; and the chimneys look weather-beaten. Still it is a stout and substantial old house, and there is no doubt that it would last with a little more patching another hundred years. There is a long piazza in front of it, which is much sunken, and in the yard an old-fashioned well, which has afforded drink to cattle and to men for a century and more. The waters are

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still transcendently sweet and lucid. When the summer-heats raged in the past August, I used to stop and imbibe, taking my turn out of the tin cup with the itinerating pedlar who had unburdened his back of the wearisome load, and placed it beside the trough. Your wine of a good vintage may make the eyes glisten a little at the tables of luxury, but depend upon it a well of water, pure water, gushing up by the way-side, to the weary and heavy-laden is drink indeed. As I ascended the steps of the piazza, I observed that there was a single mould-candle burning within, and knocked confidently at the door of the house. It was opened. 'Is PALMER within?' 'No, JOHN is absent. He will be gone over Sunday.' Alas! alas! I turned on my heel, opened the garden-gate, and finding the path through the peach-trees with some difficulty on the misty night, went back to the forlorn study.

My invalid friend looked dismal enough. 'Come,' said I, slapping him on the back very gently, (to have done it roughly on the present emergency would have been to insult him,) 'we have to take care of ourselves. What is more easy? We must flare up. We must have a little light, a little fire. My next-door neighbour is away. That makes not the least difference.' With that I lighted the astral

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lamp—no, the globe-lamp—a contemptible affair, which is a disgrace to the inventor. You raise the wick as high as possible before it will shed any light at all. In a moment it glares out, and presently becomes dim, filling your apartment with suffocating smoke and soot. Confound the lamp, with its brazen shaft and marble pedestal! I could with a good will dash it on the floor.

I remembered that there was an abundance of shavings under the shed. Going out, I collected an arm-full and rammed them into the kitchen stove, put in a few chips, and a stick or two of wood, and applied a match. Then I took the tea-kettle, and tramping to the well, filled it with water, placed it upon the stove, and it presently bubbled. Took down a caddy of black tea. After a while I found a loaf of stale bread, which makes excellent toast. In three quarters of an hour, during which I spent the time in purgatory, I returned to the study and said, touching my friend on the shoulder, 'Tea is ready.' We went into the kitchen and sat down. I said grace. The lamp smoked, the fire burned poorly, the tea was cold, my friend shivered, and I afterward heard that he said that I seemed to think that the globe-lamp was both light and warmth. The ungrateful wretch! After tea, the first natural im-

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pulse was to get warm, and still keep ourselves alive. My friend behaved extremely well, all things considered; and as the stove wanted replenishing with shavings every five minutes, he acted once or twice as a volunteer on this mission. He tried to be cheerful, but his visage looked sad. 'How stern of lineament, how grim!' For my part, I could not but enjoy an inward chuckle, like one who has the best of a bargain in the purchase of a horse. People come to your house to be entertained. In the hands of your hospitality they are like dough to be moulded into any shape of comfort. They fairly lay themselves out to be feted, and feasted, and flattered, and soothed, and comforted, and tucked in at night. They enjoy for the time being a luxurious irresponsibility. With what composure do they lounge in your arm-chair, and lazily troll their eyes over the pictures in your show-books! How swingingly they saunter on your porch or in your garden, with their minds buoyant as thistle-down, lightly inhaling the aromatic breeze, fostered by all whom they meet, and addressing all in lady-tones. Bless their dear hearts, how they do grind their teeth for dinner! Dinner! Sometimes it is no easy matter to get up a dinner. While they are in this opiate state, the man of the house is in cruel perplexity, and beef-steaks are rare.

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Oh! it is a rich treat and triumph, now and then, to have these fellows on the hip; to see them put to some little exertion to conceal their feelings, when they have expected all exertion to be made on the other part; to scan their physiognomy, and to read their thoughts as plainly as if printed in the clearest and most open type: 'This does not pay. You will not catch me in this scrape again. I will go where I can be entertained better.' I say that I enjoy their discomfiture, and consider it (if it happen rarely) a rich practical joke. It is entirely natural, and in accordance with correct principles, that they should feel exactly as they do. Does it not agree with what I have already said? Constituted as we are, there must be the outward and visible sign to stir up the devotion of the heart. Your grace of warm welcome will not do. Give your friend a good dinner, or a glass of wine; let the fire be warm and bright. Then he will come again. Otherwise not. It is human nature, At any rate, it is *my* nature. Here, however, we draw the fine hair-line of distinction. If your friend thinks *more* of the animal than of the spiritual; if he neglects any duty, undervalues any friendship, because the outward is poor, meagre, of necessity wanting, call him your friend no more!

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'Let us go to bed,' said I. 'Done,' said he. 'No, not done. The beds are to be made. There is no chambermaid in the house. What of that? Excuse me for a moment while you ram a few more shavings into the stove.' I go up stairs into the spare chamber. I can find nothing. After a half-hour's work, I manage, however, to procure pillow-cases, sheets, blankets. I go down stairs and tap my shivering friend on the shoulder, and say, chirpingly, 'Come, you must go to your snuggery, your nest. You will sleep like a top, and feel better in the morning.'

I get him into bed, and after his nightcap is on, and his head upon the pillow, I say, 'Good night; pleasant dreams to you.'

'Good night,' he responded, with a feeble smile.

Then I tumbled into my own bed, which was made up anyhow, looking out first on the moon just rising above the fogs. Oh! thou cold, dry, brassy Moon! do not shine into my chamber when I want repose. PHŒBE, DIANA, LUNA, call thee by whatever name, let not thy pale smile be cast upon my eyes! If so, sweet sleep is gone, and pleasant dreams. Out, *out*, OUT with thy skeleton face, O volcanic, brassy Moon!

When the morrow came, I went into my friend's chamber, and, as if he had been a king or a prince,

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asked him how he had rested during the night, and if the coverlets had kept him warm. He was compelled to say, as he was a man of strict veracity, that he had been a little cold. The undiscriminating varlet! I had given him all the blankets in the house.

It was Sunday morning. A Sunday in the country is a theme on which my invalid friend, who is an author, had expatiated with wonderful effect in one of his books. When he came down stairs, as the shavings were not yet lighted, I took him by the arm, and proposed a walk on the grass. But the grass was wettened by copious dews. He returned chilled, and hovered over the cold stove. It was nearly time for breakfast, but I had not given him a word of encouragement on that point. Breakfast was a puzzler. All of a sudden, striking my hand on my forehead, as if in the elicitment of a bright idea, I rushed out of the kitchen, crossed the little garden, and knocked at the door of the old farm-house.

The face of the good landlady was forthwith visible. 'Madame,' I said, 'I am in a little quandary. I have a friend with me; beside ourselves there is nobody and nothing in the house. Will you have

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the kindness to provide us breakfast, dinner, and tea to-day ?'

She most obligingly consented. In half an hour I conducted the author triumphantly to the old mansion. The clean white table-cloth was spread ; the room was 'as warm as toast,' and my friend's spirits revived. We went to church. His responses were heart-felt and audible. On returning, the walk made his blood circulate a little, and as he sat in the rocking-chair in the old farm-house waiting for the broiled chicken, and looking up at the white-washed beams, he was the picture of contentment. I was almost provoked with myself for getting him into such a comfortable fix. We had seated ourselves at the table, and were pleasantly, I think I may say *luxuriously*, engaged in the empicking of chicken-bones, when a remarkable incident occurred. It was observed that there was not a drop of water in the pitcher. This was an oversight. The landlady with the kindest alacrity hurried to the ancient well ; and she had just opened the door on her return, when putting down the pitcher, and wringing her hands, she cried out:

'Oh ! quick ! quick ! *do* come ! *do* come ! The fox ! the fox ! the fox !'

We deserted the dinner-table in an instant, ran

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out on the piazza, and oh! what a sight! Within a few yards, within pistol-shot, a splendid, sanctimonious, sly Reynard glided with a mouse-foot pace, crouching as he went, out of the neighbouring green patch, leaped softly over the stone-wall, crossed the road, and took a zig-zag course through the opposite corn-field, waving his brown tail, which was of the most extensive kind.

The provocation was most intense. Mister PALMER, his hair standing on end, rushed to the house-corner and called his black dog. 'Here, Boos! Boos! Boos! Boos!' But Boos was barking at an ill-looking customer who just at that predicament of time tried to open the gate. He seized him (Boos) by the collar; he dragged him up the road, but the latter was altogether behind the age. Although he did not succeed in striking the scent, his master assured me that if he had once got a sight of the animal he would have collared him. In about fifteen minutes after this, a couple of spotted hounds, hunting on their own hook and on the Sabbath-day, leaped over the wall, and went nosing about to the right and left, hither and thither, through the corn-field, and we heard them yelping until sun-down. The fox escaped.

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The next morning my friend went away. I cannot say that he felt very sad at parting with me; nay, I thought that his face brightened up into a genial smile as the coach drew near, and that there was something concentrated in his expression as he gave the house a parting glance, like that of one who bids farewell to the hard rocks and inhospitable coast on which he has been shipwrecked.

* * * * *

My remaining Shanghai chicken is dead. Two only were hatched. One fell off the perch on a nipping, frosty night; the other ran trembling about in the bleak weather, crying and chirping piteously. One morning I brought it into the house nearly dead, fed it with bread-crumbs, and put it in a basket by the fire, when it soon revived. It used to run about the kitchen familiarly, and sometimes came into the parlour. It was this presumption which proved fatal to the chick. One evening, when we had searched for it to put it in the basket for the night, it was no where to be found. It was not in the closets, in the corners, under the tables, under sofas, under the chairs. Holding the light at last under the stove, there lay the chicken, stone dead, his feathers much

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scorched. I was like the poor man robbed of his one little ewe-lamb. Oh, how mistaken are we in our deeds! Wipe off the frosty rime, rescue from the bleakness of the invisible wind, pull the poor freezling out of a snow-bank, and it runs into a hot-mouthed furnace of its own accord. I shall not let my Shanghai hen set on eggs again. She is not motherly, and my opinion is somewhat modified as to the peculiarity of the breed. They must be hardened and acclimated to the severity of our winters. They have few feathers, and those very light and downy, and their rear is ill-protected by the usual appendage of a tail. As I told you, they are pretty well bobbed. Their yellow legs are covered to the toes with a soft down, which shows them to be sensitive to cold, for which nature has provided them with stockings. I thought that their sentiments—their instincts, I ought to say—were generous; but Mrs. Palmer told me that the rooster would not let the chickens have anything to eat, but snapped up all the meal. I could hardly believe that the rooster would act in such wise, for he is a very strutting, noble-looking fowl. Those who come to my house admire his action as they would that of a good horse. I intend to cultivate the stock, because

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I have more faith in it than some do: and Captain S. told me that I should have a young pullet in the spring.

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VII.

November, 1852.

THE last vestiges of summer are gone with the departing year. The garden-gate is closed, the rusty scythe is hung up, the cider-mills now creak and groan, while the few remaining apples on the trees have their cheeks frost-bitten. The threshing-floors are the scene of much riot and racket. The flails glance in the air, flung aloft by strong arms, the fanning mills are in perpetual motion,

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and the old horse is condemned to his annual punishment of the treadmill. It is painful to see him monotonously stepping on an inclined plane by the hour together, weeping out perhaps his remaining eye, and while winnowing the grain for others, rapidly getting himself in condition to be turned out to die. I have some respect for the Yankee who invented the churning-machine to go by dog-power, but none whatever for the WHITNEY-like ingenuity which contrived this torture for the noble horse. Yes: he will soon be turned out to die, like that raw-boned animal which I saw the other day on the turnpike. He had been a farmer's horse, and for many seasons had ploughed the fields and did his share of arduous duty. He had earned the hay and oats and comfortable stable which should have been his reward in old age. Bnt his master had not mercy enough to cut his throat, although he could have got the money for his skin; and now he wanders about starving, and will do so, until the town's people remove his carcass from the road, a stalking monument of base ingratitude.

The other day, while reading a book, I heard a sound on the highway like the tramping of a company of dragoons. On looking out, lo! the whole road for the distance of a quarter of a mile was

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literally crowded with jackasses, with their ample ears, and tails knobbed like a lion's, following a single horseman, who rode solemnly in advance. Their approach was productive of great excitement among the horses grazing in the fields, who gallopped up and down along the fence, neighing prodigiously. I asked the conductor: 'How many asses have you?' He replied, 'A hundred and twenty-five.' 'Where do you take them?' 'To NEW-HAVEN.' The next day another troop as large passed by, and on the next another, all going to New-Haven. They are not, however, sent there to be put to college, but are thence shipped to the West Indies. The exportation of asses from the country is immense: yet the race does not appear materially diminished. The trade has long been carried on at New-Haven, and there is perhaps no place where there is so much erudition, and at the same time so many long ears.

Ever since the white frost appeared, and the air has become sharp, your ears are stunned at the break of day by long-continued and most agonized squealings. They come from all parts of the compass. The tender pigling, the bristling, obese grunter, turns his white bleared eye, now suffused with flame, for the last time, with a tender reminiscence, to the vacated pen, to the soft, wallowing sty. Visions of

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potato-parings, refuse, and sweet nubbins, straw-laid bed, and ring-tailed darlings, mingled with an instinctive presentiment of the whetted knife. Piggy does not march to his execution with the silent, dogged resignation of a condemned criminal, but invariably with a resistance of the strong police, and immense lamentations. As he always went contrary when driven, from the time of the ringing of his rooting snout, he now uses his vast muscular energy to take his own part, and issues a squealing protest against being killed. He resists with all his might, as he is dragged, pulled, and pushed along to slaughter. But Piggy should reflect that he is not the only animal who must eat. His destiny is compound: To EAT AND TO BE EATEN. The first part he has fulfilled according to his nature. For the latter part he is not responsible. You will now see him divested of his bristles, washed as white as snow in a scald-bath, and strung up by the heels, with his jaws stretched apart by a dry corn-cob. The next morning, frozen as hard as a rock, he will be stored with other produce in a wagon, with his hoofs sticking out from beneath a blanket, while the countryman, his head crouched on his shoulder to protect him from the north-east wind or a driving snow-storm, slowly wends his way to market. His final sepul-

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chre is the human stomach. He whose habitation was so lately a pig-sty, and his foot in the trough, whose aspect was most beastly, most hideous, will soon become a part of 'fine lords and fine ladies,' and no doubt enter—I say it without disrespect—into the grand mausoleum of the President of the United States. Behold that Senator expound the Constitution! Behold that Judge upon the Bench! For some part of his composition he is indebted to the sty.

So much for the transmigration of bodies, of which there can be no doubt, and the flesh of pig becomes beatified in transparent corporation. It resides in the vigor of the manly arm; it is in the purple blush of youthful beauty; it is in plumpness, and flowing lines, and tender lineaments, going before a creasy age, when the stomach abjures fat. When, during the past summer, it was my amusement to hasten to the sty, at the emptying of the desiderated slop-pail; when I listened to the porcine grunts, and was a witness of that beastly emulation to obtain the tit-bits of the leavings, and the choicest of the peels, when I turned away from the ill-smelling mud, and reflected seriously how much is conveyed in the very name of *hog*, I can scarcely realize the transfusion of such grossness to so much delicacy and

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delight. Each household is now enlivened with preparation for a 'feast of fat things.' The kitchen is a scene of continual festivity: every tub is in requisition; the empty larder is replenished: the lean poor wax fat. What a hissing and what a frying! What an unctuous smell! What an herbal fragrance! The cloven feet are turned to bowls of transparent, palpitating jelly. And souse! souse! Souse is a gelatinous, emollient, dainty morsel. Spare-ribs are as delicate as delicate can be! Steaks! Cook them in a devil-dish, with a little currant-jelly and sauces, after the Doctor's fashion, and they are beyond all praise. But when I come to speak of crackling!—'fat, call it not fat!'—O Charles, Charles! I yield the palm to thee!—That pen of thine could add a charm to every subject, and like the winter-time bedeck with greenest sprigs and fragrant parsley the very front of pig!

Again the little ruddy chunk, with its alternate layers of lean and fat, suited alike for Jacob Sprat or for his excellent wife, whose tastes were diverse, used always to be served up at judicious intervals in a dish called sour-crout. This dish we reverence for the sake of our Dutch ancestors; and although the cabbage at a certain stage has volitant principles, which, beginning at the kit-

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chen, walk without ceremony into the parlour, and stop not short of the cock-loft and rafters—a sort of spiritual cat—yet it has to the initiated a fierce relish, which can scarcely be described. The St. NICHOLAS SOCIETY will bear me out in what I say. But if there be any relish of life for which we are indebted to Piggy, it is sausage; and sausage, we have been always taught, to be relished, must be eaten at home. I remember, when a boy, the particularity of old grandmothers in the preparation of sausage. What cleanliness was required! How adequately the powdered sage and other herbs were mingled in its composition! And when it came upon the table, with buckwheat cakes, buttered and cut into four quarters, on a hot, full-sized plate, upon my word, if the coffee were well-composed, no breakfast could be more complete. But to hear me talk in this way, you might take me for a sensual epicure, instead of being, as I am, a man who can live upon a dry crust, and except at few-and-far-between intervals of hilarious health, cares not what he eats, so long as it be well-served and clean:

> 'I CANNOT eat but little meat,
> My stomach is not good.'

Perhaps Mrs. HALE's immortal cookery-book gives the best receipt for sausage. Having said thus

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much for Piggy, I have only done it to show how admirably every part of creation fulfils its destiny, and contributes to its proper end. But I must turn the tables, by revealing a little of my own proper sentiment. Pork I like, but it must be in homœpathic proportion. Last winter I lived on the sea-shore, and at 'killing-time,' somebody sent me a chunk of aromatic head-cheese. Sitting up late at night before a good fire, and writing as I am now in the 'small hours,' an inclination came over me to partake of supper. I threw upon the coals a half-dozen fine oysters, and when they were roasted nearly to a crisp, partook of them with a little good bread-and-butter. Afterward, to do justice to my friend's gift, I put into my mouth a small piece of head-cheese! I never was more convinced of the grossness of fat. Upon my word, no Israelite ever loathed a morsel of the unclean animal more heartily than I did that bit of head-cheese. It sickened me on the spot!

But all people cannot attain to shell-fish. When I went a-trouting in Vermont, WILLIAM MALLORY, by profession a fisherman, as we sat down to take our dinner on the turf, after a successful day's sport, used to tilt his bottle of raw whisky to his lips, and then cut off a chunk of fat pork. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'there is nothing that so sets onto the stomach.'

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'Yes,' said I, 'this way of taking dinner is pleasant.' 'Oh,' said he, 'that isn't all of it. It's more'n that. It's *natur*.' But before I get through, or have shown for how much enjoyment we are indebted to the sty, I must make you realize what has often passed before my own eyes. There is a play-ground, and a hundred boys are kicking at a foot-ball. Now it flies high in air, and into the next field. They all tumble over the rails, following each other like a flock of sheep. Now they have it in a corner, and what a stubbing and a-kicking, accompanied by a cry of 'shinnee! shinnee!' and at last they get it out, and with youthful cheeks flushed with health and exercise, with a succession of well-aimed kicks, they drive it home to the goal. Now if Piggy had not squealed with agony in the morning, this game could not have come off toward eve.

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VIII.

December, 1852.

THE year is passing away--passing away; but how lamb-like! The voice of 'Blustering Railer' has scarce been heard; the breeze comes soft and melting, as if hot-wafted from the aromatic South; the jolly sleigh-bells have not been tuned, and the river freely rolls within its banks. Soon, alas! it will be seen no more as a feature in the landscape. But as we prize an absent friend like gold, as one remembers beauty when de-

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parted, so I have learned to estimate the river; not when, released, it flashes in the sun, but when, like ALPHEUS, it has retreated to the shades; and when a winding-sheet of snow is on its breast, and when a glass is on its face, and undistinguished from the common earth, its sound goes forth no more, and the granite hills stand up like monuments of its departed glory. Now its great heart throbs; its pulse ebbs and flows: its face sparkles with animation, and mirrors many a pleasing image. The winter tarries: Death has yet failed to assert his silent reign.

Rejoice, O homeless and poverty-stricken! Truly says the sentimental one, 'GOD tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.' But when HE gives to it a cutting edge, and bars the living streams, HE opens human hearts, and keeps the tear of Pity from being frozen. Thus while the bosom of the bounteous Earth is cold, the golden harvest is transferred to gentler zones, and RUTH goes gleaning.

* * * * * *

Now among the Highlands the mist ascends in the moist, unseasonable weather. It rolls in and out of the deep clefts and gorges, creeps over the table-land, and every peak smokes like a volcano.

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When the sun went down last night, obscured behind the hills, the eaves dripped, and presently there came a drenching rain. 'This weather cannot last, albeit it is kindly to the poor.' Presently the wind blew shrill around the house-corners, whistled down the chimney, and then was heard shrieking and dying away afar off. 'It is chopping about; we shall have it cold toward morning.' I went to the outer door, and 'flung it freely open to the storm.' The drizzling rain had become changed to flying sleet and peppering hail, borne upon sudden gusts; the moon over the mountains waded painfully; the apple-boughs began to crackle. 'It grows colder; the year will go out like a lion.' And as it was too late to replenish the fire, I took the candle and went to bed.

How pleasant, when you are snug and warm, to hear the crusted branches rub the panes, or the hail pelt against them like fine shot, now and then to be varied by a swash—the roaring of the winds, which makes the house jar! So wore the night; but when the morrow's sun arose, it shone upon a scene more radiant than the one which 'charmed the lad:' each rounded hill a crystal dome; the mountain-corridors all chandeliered betwixt their glassy walls; the forest trees festooned from limb to limb with whitest

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wreaths; the steep declivities bristling with icy spikes sun-tipped, surmounted by a single star, and all the earth bestrewn with untold wealth, as if the Esterhazys of the realm had swept along, and every bush bore jewels. Good my friend, I thought of Koh-i-noor! I never saw such cold, yet radiant emulation; gem rivalling gem, as prism flashed to prism. The stalks stood up cased in transparent mail; the sun-flower's head could boast a gaudier crown; the eaves were hung with bright stalactites; while every breeze shook down the vitreous tubes, and all the avenue sparkled. Crystalization! what a wondrous work! At last the sun, whose earliest beams imbued with rosy light the powdered heights and columns of the wafted snows, rose paramount, to absorb all lesser glories in his own. 'Fret-work and nonsense!' he appeared to say, 'what's all this tinsel?' O the sun! the sun! centre of centres! light of lights! illumining the rounded shafts and columns which uphold the universe! Whether he hangs above the spinning sphere and goes not down upon an artic summer, gives up the temperate zones to ice and snow, or in his zodiac course, dividing day and night, stands vertical above the blazing belt which girts the earth, he is too great to tamper with illusion! Visions of the night, the unreal, the

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spectral, and the unsubstantial, are dissolved like charms; while he alone, emblem of Truth, stands fixed and firm, feeding his urn from the Eternal source.

Ye denizens of the city, who think no luxury like that of your well-walled abodes, and only rusticate awhile in June, to see the breakers beat, or to hear the streams murmur, have you no winter-palace on the rivers, and no homestead among the hills? Come out! come out! There's warmth between the ample jambs. There is beauty in the landscape, even now; and when you go to face the nipping air, you shall behold a spectacle well worth the winter-jaunt. Crows' Nest, it is true, looks hoar and bleak; gigantic icicles are pendent from the rocks; and as you walk through hemlock groves, you may chance to come upon a cascade frozen, a water-fall arrested on the foaming brink, a mill-flume clogged, great rocks and boulders crusted in the stream. There is an animated play upon the pond: Godenski, or the Skaters of Wilna. I for one would not be absent from the fields to greet the early spring, to hear the blue-bird carol, or the buds crack in June; and still I love among the snow-clad hills and wintry vales to see the cloudy banks and the drifts circling about the peaks; just as in sweltering heats to watch the

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impending gusts, to hear the thunders roll among the mountains, to mark the lightnings as they play, and the effect of light and shadow. Here are no little theatres with tawdry show, pasteboard pictures; but most magnificent, the sceneries stretch far and wide in a new phase. Here are no strings tight-strained to concert pitch: but oh! the opera of the winter winds, soon as great BOREAS has seized the baton, and taken his seat in the high North, commanding them to blow high, to blow low, now here, now there; now screaming through scrannel-pipes, now hooting as if the fiends kept concord, now rolling through the wide gaps, big mountain-gulches with full, commanding swell, then retreating to some Sistine cell like a dying Miserere.

My friend, it is my way to walk upon the porch when first I rise, to see the tintings of the rosy dawn and hail the day. This morning, on the sill of my own door, I looked upon a sad sight. Two flying-squirrels lay side by side, with wings expanded, frozen stark and stiff. The storm had wrenched the branch that overlapped their cozy nest, scattered the contents of the full granary and nutty treasures of the hollow tree, and they fell upon the threshold of the inhospitable house, to be pinched by a wind much sharper than their little teeth. How often had I

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seen them in the apple-orchard glide from the summit of the blossoming bough, taking the benefit of some chance zephyr, down to the distant trunk nicked into round holes by the iterating strokes of red-headed wood-pecker! How often had I watched them slant their downy sails in air, admired their sloping descent, and swift, yet gradual alightment, enough to breed a rumpling jealousy among the feathers! But when they picked a nut with delicate skill, and chiselled out the oily shavings, making a carriage for Queen MAB, 'Give the prize,' I said, 'to the fairies' coach-makers.' Creatures of grace! how different from the church-haunting bats! In school-boy days, with a slight silver chain about their necks, I have seen them nestle in the bosom of amorous boys. Petted into assurance, I have known them build their nest in a lady's work-box. The change from life to death, methinks, presents no stronger contrast than among the gracefuller and more agile animals. The fawn just glancing in your path, and the aerial picture of the deer just vanished like a shadow, the gliding of the glossy swallow, the spiritual beauty of the little squirrel, how different from the dull and lumpish forms when the electricity of life has fled!

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January, 1st, 1853.

It is the opinion of some author, whose name and whose exact words I am unable to recall, that fixed holidays and festivals are not salutary. 'Let the young,' says he, 'be taught to draw their happiness from the present, Let them make the most of that which now is. To be looking forward or backward to some day christened 'happy' or 'merry,' is enough to breed disaffection to vulgar time, and bring a portion of the calendar into disrespect.' A worse argument, or a colder, icier tit-bit of philosophy, was never set forth. On what pinnacle of Reason does this PLATO dwell, feeding on ether, and overlooking the wants of common men? Is he wiser than SOLOMON? Imagine all the little boys in round-abouts throughout the world trained up by arbitrary injunction to be happy the whole time! Christmas is coming. What of that, my dear little fellows? Every day is alike. There is no such being as SANTA CLAUS, and never has been since chimneys were built. As to his clattering on the tiles with prancers, it is untrue. He is nowhere seen but in pictures, nor extolled except in the world-renowned poem of CLEMENT C. MOORE, who has thus turned his imagination to bad account. Attend to your books!

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Stop drawing the devil on your slates! Imagine, I say, all the solemn little urchins in a row, hemmed in by the dead walls of the school-room, and with nothing before them but an opaque black-board, would they not become saffron and cadaverous as the money-getting men whose year is not even bright-speckled by Sundays, and is like a monotonous dream of dollars broken in two by the explosion of Fourth-of-July cannon and snapping-crackers? What if anticipation were abolished, and the memory of past joys were no longer sweet? I hate such heresies as much as I can hate anything when the year is span new. Blessed be the illuminated peaks of time, sun-gilt and temple-crowned, precious Neboes! Plodding through the dull hours, over the dead flats of a weary life, over the sharp rocks of arduous duty and responsibility, from the deep gulfs of dejection, we see the bright hill-tops ahead. Then does the drooping wing become like the golden feathers of a dove. Sweet be the vales which lie beyond, from which we look back upon the rosy hours of the eve, the sumptuous light of the setting sun!

Instead of having no festivals, we have need of more in a poverty-stricken calendar. The days will not be jealous of each other. Whoever heard of a fight between Monday and Tuesday? For current

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time will divide itself into eras—days marked by a white stone, anniversaries of joy or sorrow—which we will at least secretly cherish as they pass by. Human nature knows its own wants, and the recognition of birth-days is founded in its holiest and best laws; and if a wicked Utilitarianism should erase the Golden Letters, abrogate feasts, and untwine the festive garlands from the happiest of them all, the very act would constitute a bad anniversary. These remembrances are the very sentiment of life, and encroach upon the inroads of an essential worldliness. I think that joy is not less sacred than sorrow; the one with its coronals, the other with its sable weeds, its cypress and its rosemary; and each has its times and seasons and outward tokens. There is nothing good in the world without its tokens. No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. Who likes to be glad in a corner, letting his stomach dimple with a stingy, chuckling, gurgling giggle? It is perfectly amazing to me, that so-called good people have taken up such a horrid antipathy to all kinds of festive customs and recreations which have sprung up in the ordinary progress of society; and they will snap the knitted hands of rosy children in an innocent dance to the sound of a viol, while they cannot shake a material

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lash over the subtle, sordid, immaterial spirit of greed and lust of gain. They will say, 'Can you go from these things to your bended knees?' And wherefore not? let us ask. For even the wildest hilarity, which is to be condemned, excludes for the time being the gnawing worm of envy, malignities, and carking cares, unchristian discontent, and cursed feuds. And I once told a wrangling religious neighbourhood, that it would give me pleasure to see them get up a furious horse-race, which I had never yet had the curiosity to witness, and bet as heavily as they liked; for I thought that the improvement of the breed of horses was perhaps a false argument for that kind of sport, but it might be an improvement to the breed of men. Do not imagine that I am retained as counsel for the Union Course, or that I am a candidate for a jockey-club. I live quietly in a little house in the country, one story and a half high, from which I do not even sally upon a fox-chase; but look out of the window, and 'scrutinize' what is going on in the world, sometimes gaily, and sometimes with a more prevailing sadness, but always with good will to men. A notion like the above I cannot help associating with the sleekness of hypocrisy, and think that the abettors of it are essentially worldly-mind-

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ed. But out of whatever system it may spring, it is wrong and false and bad, throwing a doubt and a suspicion over things which ought to be as free from these as the rose just wetted with the dews. It gives false views of life, spreads a colour of jaundice over a blonde Innocence, skims off the rich cream from our daily cup, leaving a blue, sickly pool beneath. And to be fed from the rocking-cradle with this kind of mother's milk, is enough to sour the hopefullest infant, the sweetest suckling—*animosus infans non sine Dis*—to an adult devil in time to come. From innate feeling, and from association, and from observation, and from reason, and from reflection, and from cultivation, I have learned to hate such notions, and I do now most heartily, as *much as I can hate any thing when the year is span new*. I do not believe that those who hold them are capable of enjoying existence as God intended it to be enjoyed. 'Because they are pious, do they think there shall be no more cakes and ale?'

I wish you could have been with me on Christmas eve. It was a misty, dank, ungenial time without: there were no layers of snow upon the hemlocks; there were no piping winds and snapping cold, such as we consider not unpleasant or unsea-

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sonable for the time. There is an ancient homestead on the river's brink, large, hereditary, full of comfort, rich in reminiscence. *There* was the order of the CINCINNATI formed. Over against those jambs, now blazing with cheerful light, they sat and mused, those venerable men, in days which tried men's souls, and on the walls the choice and mellow pictures of Copley may be seen, and portraits of those who belonged to past generations. Oh! what a beautiful, full-length likeness of a boy is there. Largely enclosed with fertile acres, the house stands yet with uncorrupted timbers, and with snug, warm roof to overlook the classical dominion. Here for an hundred years the Christmas day has not gone by without a merry meeting, and urchinal laughter enough to make the walls crack. Now as I sat at the festal board, and in due course of time saw the Boar's head brought in, a host of pleasant fancies came over me. Merry Old England! I thought of thee, thou green isle of the ocean, but my mind reverted not to feudal halls, but holy homes. Picture of pictures! could we peep within, what groupings of youth and beauty on this day in that favored land! The rich red blood of chivalric times still courses as if it had just gushed from the original fount. Olden usage is not yet dead. Keep up the time-honoured cus-

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toms. Reflect, like true philosophers, how much of our happiness we owe to little things. Chase not away those bright smiles from the faces of the young, because the cheeks now radiant with anima tion have in days gone by, as, alas! they will be yet again, trickled over by tears.

Of all festivals in the year, Christmas is most looked for with eager joy. Short as the days of December are, the approach of the season brings with it a contagious joy. All classes feel it, and it appears to me when the day comes, that there are no such men as Turks, Jews, Heretics and Infidels. Again in the air we hear the sweet echoes of the angels' chorus, 'Peace on earth, good-will to all mankind.'

A merry Christmas! Who will be so sour as to think the epithet is ill-applied? For now we take back the wandering prodigals once more to our hearts; the erring or the ungrateful who have strayed far from our genuine love. It is meet that we should make merry and be glad. But how much more when we are commanded by the voice of God, since now His only Son, who was no prodigal, but who was recovered from the 'far country' of the grave, appears to visit again the bereaved earth! 'It is meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this my Son was dead, and is alive again, was

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lost, and is found.' Now is the season of gifts. And what more precious, what more fairy-like in the tenure of its boon, than a heart-given gift? Dig out a lump of gold from the rich earth; get it by hard toil betwixt the day-light and the dark; and it is dull, lack-lustre lead, in comparison. You can lock it; you can grasp it; you can gloat over it; but can you *smile-weep* over it, as if it came from an angel in the skies? What if it be a booklet, stamped upon its pure leaves with the delicate creations of art and with the lovely fancies of a poet? A Spencer, a Donne, a Herbert, a Waller, a Shakspeare, a Rogers, a Bryant! What if it be rather a holy book of prayer? Lay it up among the archives, among the arcana, in the treasure-house of pleasant things, where the thief shall never steal it from your possession, and the dust of forgetfulness shall never cover it!

But behold, the Christmas-tree has up-sprung with a magic growth. It is no twig, no bushlet, no crooked, gnarled, ugly branch, wrenched off in haste or tossed aside by the Boreal winds, but a veritable, ample, bright-leaved tree, culled with the choicest care from the heart of the woods; and no sooner is it implanted in the ample drawing-room, laden with its treasures and blazing with innumerable waxen tapers, than a juvenile band bursts through

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the hitherto enclosed barriers, and dances round it with uproarous merriment:

> 'Come, knit hands and beat the ground
> In a light fantastic round.'

Never with more earnest zest could the golden fruit be picked in the gardens of the Hesperides. The rosy-footed Jenny abounds in presents, and baskets filled with sugar-plums are pendent from her plump arms; Crom and Bob and Annie and Mary are so endowed and decorated that Crœsus was not more rich. The fruitage-bearing boughs shake down their treasures for the old and young.

There is a bright stretch of days between merry Christmas and New Year's, like a gulf between two hills filled with sun. On New Year's eve it was a pleasant spectacle to see once more assembled the same happy troop, the rosy-footed Jenny beaming with smiles as in a halo of light. At midnight, when the watches were compared, and they were seeing the old year out, the young people got hold of all the bells in the house, down to one composed of the metal of ancient Trinity. Well, it is only once a year. *Bonum est desipere in loco.* But when the sounds had ceased, and sleep came down on juvenile lids, and midnight shed her essential stillness on the scene, we stood before the blazing

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hearth, W. and I, and spoke of CHARLES. Could any one like he embalm such memories? Oh! when I think of him as one writing with a dove's quill dipped in the very humours of his dear heart, picturing those tender fancies, those matchless portraits, those indefinable graces which only yielded to the transfer of *his* power, I am ready to snap the ink-drops from this pen of mine, and go and drop a tear upon his tomb. Never did the rills of thought wear themselves through so sweetly a romantic channel. Here there is a bower to rest in; there I see the blue sky, or bank-side flowers, mirrored in the pool; then again the agitation of the sweet water. But oh! that Essay on the New Year! 'We will read it,' said W. Then commenced a long search upon the well-filled shelves. In vain the candle was held now low among the ponderous tomes of rich divinity and classic lore; in vain high up to the aerial realms of metaphysics and the Aldine bards. I saw a record to the fame of stately JOHNSON; I glanced upon the polished wit of ADDISON; I read the names of WYCHERLY and CONGREVE, golden-lettered; but LAMB, with all his subtle charms, lay hid. Nay, do not flare the candle to the right. BEAUMONT and FLETCHER! My word for it now, that CHARLES cannot be far.

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And sure enough. In meek seclusion, deferring in his modest merits to more sounding names, he stood apart. With a sort of triumph we bore him to the cheerful hearth, and with his charming page beguiled ourselves until the peep of dawn, to hear him moralize in his own way, and to listen to his own words flowing like a silver stream.

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IX.

January, 1853.

I LIKE to look out of the window over the corn-fields, and see the black phalanx of crows wheeling through the misty air, and laboriously, with a slow regularity of movement, flapping their ebon plumes. They go in discordant companies, helter-skelter; some high, some low; some hovering over the near corn-stack, others just appearing in sight over the mountain crests: how different from the graceful wavelet, the orderly

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procession of geese, or long-necked swans, which are seen like a line of PROFESSOR ANTHON'S manuscript in the sky! There is no order about them: every crow for himself, and let those who come last feed at the side-table. 'Caw! caw! caw!' This sound so discordant, seems to me like the cry of famine in mid-air in a desolate land.

The forage must be poor enough. The fat earth-worm lies low down beneath the frozen clod, turned up no longer by the garden spade, and unattainable by the pickaxe; the grubs have vanished from the waving corn; the winged insects of summer no more find their sepulchre in the red throats of birds; while every vestige of food is buried deep under the winter snows and slabs of solid ice. The base of the pyramidal corn-stacks may yield a few grains, and some carrion by the way-side some choice picking; otherwise it fares ill with the old crow. Although he wears a respectable suit of black, yet how he lives GOD knows, 'WHO feedeth the young ravens when they cry." I am acquainted with a rookery on Long-Island, where myriads of crows come home to roost every night. By break of day, with immense cawing and preliminary flappings, they move off to the sea-shore to pay a visit to the gulls, the cranes, the old-wives, the loons, the coots, the

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devil-divers, the wild duck, the tetering snipe, and to gorge their stomachs with the soft-shelled clams. Toward sun-down, they go back to Lloyd's Neck in black clouds, which darken the air; and as they bungle about, and jostle each other in the grove, the dead limbs crackle as if shaken by a north-east storm; while the noise which they make in settling down, their vociferous barter in the exchange of roostings, the shower of dry sticks and rubbish, and the almost articulate talk of the airy bed-fellows before they sleep, saying,

'Caw—caw—cawn—aw'—cawn—awn—awn'n.
Aw—yaw—gaw'n—awrt'r—corn—awn'e—mawn'n?'

'Are—you—going—after—corn—in the—morning?'

are really—'wunnerful.'

At last they put their heads under their wings, while the still blacker bed-quilt of the night tucks them in and is drawn over them. Great is the consternation of the birds if startled in their sleep by the explosion of mischievous artillery. For if the guests at Lloyd's Manor, or a boat's crew from the yacht in Huntington Harbor, choose to make a nocturnal visit to blow off their fowling pieces in the grove, 'my sakes a-massy!' how the black down does fly! Roused out of their carrion-pictured

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dreams, they wheel in contracted circles; they tottle about in the dark, fly plump against each other, and crack their bills together, and get their plumes interlocked at the thighs, while the whole phalanx is staggered and becomes confused. This is unfair play, O ye guests of the Manor, and O ye sailors from the yacht! To come within gun-shot of JACOBUS CROW by day-light, requires a sneaking erudition, not easily attained. After you have crept along the hedge in the most humbly crouching-position, say for a quarter of a mile, and are within a hundred yards of the spot from which you think it would be judicious to take a crack, you will see the sentinel-bird, who stands ready to sound the alarm in good time, slowly set his wings in motion, as when the wheels of a steam-boat take their preliminary turns, and off he flops, with a 'caw! caw!' repeated on all hands by the black guards Such is the nature of these feathered negroes, these Africans of the air, who, as regards colonizing, have a constitution and by-laws of their own, lest the breed of crows should run out, and jet black should become an unknown color in a tawdry world. In vain, then, are those cast-off breeches stuffed with straw, and those old coats, out at the elbows, stuck up in the middle of the fields, to be a bug-a-boo to the younglings,

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and rob the craws of the hungry of a few germinating grains. It is, beside, a moot-point whether the exterminating policy be not bad for the corn, because the question lies in the kernel, and concerns the respective destructiveness of carrion-crow, green worm, and old grub. So many woodpeckers have been shot off since the invention of percussion-caps, and so many indeed of all the flighty tribe who delve in the wormy barks, that fruit-trees languish, and all the crops are affected with blight. I take it for granted that a man is seized of the fee-simple of his birds as well as his land, and I should bring an action for trespass against any one who took the life of my wood-peckers or my crows. For myself I would not aim a gun at a crow, for fear that I should miss the mark in more senses than one, and that he should 'wheel about' upon me, enveloped in smoke and stunned with noise, with the somewhat harsh sarcasm of 'caw! caw!'

The other day, after visiting a maimed man, I fell in with a poor young crow, wounded in one wing, and skipping in a lop-sided manner on the skirts of a hedge. I caught him after a hard chase over the stubble-fields, intending to take him home and instruct him in the first rudiments of the Saxon tongue. I thought that he could make the green parrot blush

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for his elocution; and in case his progress were respectable, I would christen him McCaw; after which I would be a Roland for an Oliver, should any one shoot my McCaw. But he had imbibed notions of abolition in his own free element, or perhaps from hovering around the confines of Uncle Tom's Cabin. He clutched my breast and picked my hands with the ferocity of a young vulture; and when I set him down, such an overturning did he make among the tin-kettles and cullenders of the kitchen, that I opened the door and turned him loose upon the 'wide, wide world.' O thou recuperative Nature, bind up his wounds!

Exceedingly picturesque in the winter landscape is the crow sitting on a leafless bough of the hoary oak, (itself a striking object of the scene,) when the ground is covered with a mantle of the chastest snow. He is at present almost the only bird we have; nor is his voice, though harsh, untimely, now that the mellower songsters of the grove are hushed. For when welcome Blue-Bird comes no more to greet the early spring, nor skimming Swallow flits before the door; when Robin Red-Breast has ceased to chant his roundelay, and Chi'pin'-Bird to gather crumbs upon the walk; when the small Wren has flitted from his accustomed nest, leaving the

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dry straw within the roofed and windowed house in which two rival architectures have been combined; when THRUSH departs, and BOBOLINK has trilled his parting strain, and when the summer sky no longer blossoms with the wings of butterflies, and all the pictured fleet of little rovers have sailed away to cruise in warmer gulf-streams of the aerial altitudes, cutting the thin wave of the navigable air, welcome ye black unmitigated plumes, combed into smoothness by the sharp-toothed winds, glossy in the light of the slant December sun! O thou most suitable adjunct of bleakness, statuesque CROW! carved as from a chunk of that material Egyptian darkness which could be felt! I sometimes think of one who inscribed a poem with a quill plucked from the Raven's wing, writing with supra-mortal eloquence, his spirit veloped in majestic, solemn gloom, as of the spirit-land. EDGAR! thou art the world of shades.

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JACOBUS CROW likes to stray away from his flock by twilight, and be alone. I have seen him at that hour on the top of a corn-stack, (with perhaps a group of his fellows on an adjacent tree, dotting a limb as with black blossoms,) or on the off-shoots of a decaying stump, on a twig of which a little round screech-owl has just hopped, while the barn-yard fowls have perched for the night upon its lateral branches, looking about on the cold scene, as if reflecting on the immortality of a crow's soul. Undisturbed by the tinkling sleigh-bells, he stands motionless in his reverie. It is the time to be filled with solemn thought. Darkness is creeping on, and shadow is overlapped with thickening shadow. Hard by, in the farm-yard, the ruminating cow is chewing I know not what cud of reflection. OWL and CROW appear to commune together.

'Can you see?' says AFRICANUS.

'My eyes! yes: that is my vocation.'

'Can you tell *me*, by-and-by, from the brocade of the night?'

No answer.

'Speak, ULUL, and join me in a bit of psalmody for the benefit of yon farm-house, before the curtain of the night comes down.'

'Tu-whit! to-whoo! Tu-whit-tu-whoo!'

'Caw! caw! caw! caw!' *Exeunt omnes.*

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Come, friends, this is 'Bleak House' to-night, so far as the outward aspect is concerned. The winds howl—the roof is covered with snow. Gather round the stove-pipe, and while you sip a little of this hot-spiced cider, and partake of this popped corn, these nuts, and pippins of an approved juice, I will tell you a story, called

VANDERDONK:

A LEGEND OF CROW HILL.

Far back in the misty period of an heroic age, there lived upon the summit of the Crow-Hill an honest Dutchman, entitled Vanderdonk. He bought the spot, with all its rugged acres and stubborn glebe, with guilders earned by hard tugging in the Father-land. But the Dutch guilders were by no means buried without interest in the vaults of this rocky bank. The golden grain waved year after year upon the sloping hill-sides, and by the time that his belly became portly, Vanderdonk had become rich. He minded his own business, and seldom spoke except when spoken to, and then in grunting affirmative, 'Yaw, yaw.' He was the pic-

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ture of dogged resolution, as he was seen in relief over against the sky on Crow Hill; whacking with a long goad the frontal bones of the thick-kneed oxen—always slowly plodding, but surely gaining. The shadow of his capacious barns swallowed up his snug little house, which was all kitchen. For he had a fancy to eke out barns with hovels, and hovels with long sheds, making a sunny court, or hollow square, wherein a multitude of chickens ransacked the chaff at the heels of the thoughtful kine. It was astonishing by what slow, and just, and imperceptible degrees, his riches grew. For it was scarcely noticed when he drove in an additional nail, or extended an enclosure, till all at once the neighbours, looking upon the circumvallation about Crow Hill, opened their eyes, as if awakened from a dream, and exclaimed, 'He's rich!'

Behold him, then, at the height of prosperity, while all around his harvests waved; his cabbages were marshalled in rows and compact regiments; his cattle lowed; his hens cackled; his ducks clucked; his pigeons cooed. Poor VANDERDONK!

HONNES had an only son named DERRICK, a half-crazy, half-idiotic, queer boy, who could not be trained up to follow the ploughshare, and did exactly as he pleased. As he verged toward his majori-

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ty, and showed no signs of advance in intellect, but rather received reinforcements of the queer devils by which he was occasionally possessed, his future prospects occupied no small portion of the reflecting moments of VANDERDONK, as he smoked his evening pipe on the porch. He and his wife were beginning to be well stricken in years. What should he do with Crow Hill, and to whom devise his estate in trust for his son, who was totally unfit to manage his affairs? When this thought had given Hans sufficient perplexity for the time being, he filled up another pipe, and got rid of the subject by thinking—of nothing! Now this boy brought him into sad trouble at this period, by an unfortunate adventure, which I shall relate.

Among the flocks of crows which wheeled incessantly, in summer and winter, above his dominion, and from which Crow Hill derived its name, Hans waged a continual war. A hundred bits of tin, wood, and looking-glass fluttered at the ends of long strings, attached to poles, in the corn-fields Numerous scare-crows were set up, as horrible as could be invented by the imagination of Hans. Moreover, as occasion offered, he made a successful shot with a long gun with a big-flinted, queer lock, which had belonged to his grand-father in Holland,

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and had descended to him as an heir-loom. Sometimes he made the crows drunk on corn soaked in whiskey, and as they reeled about the hillocks, knocked them on the head.

But there was one crow, almost white, and said to be a century old, held sacred by the neighbours as an Egyptian Ibis. He walked almost undistinguished among the pigeons, by which association his nature had become tamed, and his harsh *caw* was at last modified into a melting *coo*. The neighbours had frequently said, 'VANDERDONK, don't shoot that bird,' and Honnes religiously obeyed the mandate, and regarded his guest with a partial eye; for he had been told that ill-luck would be sure to attend him the moment that he meditated the destruction of the crow. The sentiment of superstition is not the offspring of stolidity, but he resolved to be on the safe side, while his wife treated the bird with a religious respect. This ancient visiter, whom the very king-birds forbore to pick at, out of veneration, was known by the familiar name of JIMMY, and happy was he who in a cold winter, would put in his way a few liberal handfuls of corn.

One day, DERRICK, in one of his wild moods took the long gun from the corner of the kitchen, and strayed away. He did not return at high noon to

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get his dinner, but toward sun-down, just as the old woman had come from milking the cows, he burst into the house with a loud laugh, violently struck the butt-end of the gun on the floor, rammed his hand into his pockets, filled with mottled feathers, and threw the dead JIMMY into his mother's lap. The good wife lifted up her skinny hands, while the very borders of her cap stood out with horror. Petrified for a moment, she sat still in the high-backed chair; then spilling the bleeding bird out of her lap, and rising in a rage, she pointed with her finger alternately at the victim and the guilty DERRICK, as HONNES, returning from his evening work and seeing what had been done, crooked his right arm, partially closed his fist, and aimed a violent blow at his son's ear.

When the people had been informed of the massacre accomplished by DERRICK, they exclaimed, 'O Bub! what have you done? You have shot JIMMY! We would not stand in your shoes for all the coin that your mother has in her stocking; no, not for Crow Hill!' But DIRK only grinned and giggled, and appeared pleased with his exploit.

As for VANDERDONK, on the occasion aforesaid, so soon as he had somewhat recovered from his excitement, he took up JIMMY by the legs, dug a deep

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hole, and buried him in the garden, exclaiming, as he resumed his seat and re-loaded his pipe, 'Bad lug! bad lug!' In fact, that very night the worthy couple had scarce retired, when a loud cawing was heard through the house, and soon after, to their inexpressible horror, they observed by the light of the moon the old crow perched upon the bed-post. VANDERDONK rose from his bed, and attempted to reach him with the handle of a broom-stick—but only struck the unresisting air. The image still remained, and it repeatedly opened its mouth, crying pathetically, 'Caw! caw!' while the ring-doves and pigeons under the eaves uttered all night an ululating lamentation. 'Bad lug! bad lug!' repeated Hans, covering up his head with the clothes. And assuredly bad luck presently overtook him. The next spring, soon after he had planted his crops, it was announced to him one day that all the crows in the neighbourhood were pulling up his corn, without any regard to his signals. He went out, and with one discharge of his long gun drove them all away. Soon after, Derrick was missing, and he went out with a stout stick to thrash him on his way home. In vain he sought him at the road-side ale-house, and at all his accustomed haunts. Then he wandered over his own domains, and just

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as he had ascended a peak of Crow Hill, a singular omen met his eye. He saw Derrick running out of the woods, his hat off, his hair streaming in the winds, hotly pursued by a whole flock of crows. They hovered about the boy's head, and picked at him in the rear. VANDERDONK flew to the rescue; he laid about him furiously with the stick which he had taken to whip Derrick, but was obliged to give up the attack, and join the boy in his flight. They hurried over the fields; they leaped the fences and emerged into the highway, taking the nearest path to their home. There all the little boys, rushing out of school, flung their caps in the air, and joined in a hue-and-cry: 'There they go! See 'em! see 'em! Caw! caw! Vanderdonk! Vanderdonk!' and all the windows were thrown up, and the old women lifted their hands and exclaimed, 'My sakes alive!' Arrived within doors, the fugitives sat down breathless, well nigh frightened out of their wits, while all the noisy flock continued to pick at the windows and invest the house. From this time Honnes hardly held up his head, but became dogged and morose to the end of his life, still grunting at intervals as he shook his head, 'Bad lug! bad lug!' In the garden where he had buried the bird, stramonium, and burdock, and villanous weeds grew up,

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with inconceivable luxuriance and rancour. Wherever he planted any thing, white JIMMY led on the hungry harpies, and neither scare-crows nor his long gun availed him any thing. As to Derrick, he screamed habitually in his dreams, and the spectre of the murdered bird continued to re-appear. Whether the house was ever exorcised by the visits of the Dominie, has not been handed down ; but a reverence for old age is to this day inculcated in the school-houses of Crow Hill by the Legend of VANDERDONK.

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X.

February, 1853.

THE weather has often (not always in our climate) a fixed character in the first winter months which can be depended on. At times, in January, you may sit before the open window to enjoy the balmy air, as if it were an arrearage of summer, a draft of July on January, (to make up for a cold north-east shivering storm out of place,) looking down in the court upon the blue flower of the myrtle, the blossoming stock-jelly, and the

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opening bosom of the damask-rose. Outside, against the wall, hangs the yellow canary, in the continual sun-shine of the morning, breaking forth in an ecstacy of song. The haze of Indian summer still lingers, and the weak-lunged patient stands placidly in the door-way and exchanges agreeable greetings with those who pass by, complimenting the weather. 'Fine day' fine day!' Oh! the delusive and bewildering *interregnum!* Bees creeping from their cells! birds chirping on the eaves! lilac-buds bursting! scent of flowers and balm of the garden stealing on the sense in many a reviving puff! in short, a mock summer. All this is for a day; but such a day! It makes you think of Italy. It is suggestive of a zephyr in a valley fanning an Aeolian harp-string; wild BOREAS from his fastness in the mountain, frowning down with grim scorn, and a shepherd-boy on a rock, with palette on his arm, his head tilted a-one side, his tongue moderately out, a smile on his face, painting the picture. Behind the genius stands, in threatening attitude, the master of the farm, the lash uplifted above the urchin's flaunting plume, and with one arm stretched toward the sheep on the mountain-side, fleeing before the ravenous dogs like cloud-shadows over the plains. Then imagine all other accessories in a

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charming scene: brook winding through the meadows, farm-house, bridge, mill-flume, rocks, waterfalls. Mix up the colors, give me the brush, and let me fling it against the canvas in despair. But this will lead me into namby-pambics.

I have received a handful of rose-buds on a Christmas-day from a 'faire ladye,' who plucked them out of her own pleasant garden. They had been once hooded with snow, but not rifled of their sweetness, only the edges of the leaves a little crisped, and you could see into their crimson hearts. This is an unanticipated favor; but when JANUARIUS begins to reign, expect steady weather. His temper is even, his look almost uniformly acrimonious. This cold JUPITER sits among the Arctics, and blows flour out of his mouth, like the miller in the pantomine, making every thing white within reach. It is well to go forth to meet him armed *cap-a-pie*, clambering the hill-side fortress and breasting all its volleys; but for the most part, consider your house your castle, and your castle in a state of siege. Blaze away from within as he pelts from without; roar up the chimney in answer to his storming appeal and rattling hail; lock the doors, plaster the chinks, stop up the crannies, put the women and children in a

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safe place, feast away, and make the port-holes glare with livid flash.

'*Large reponens lignum super foco.*'

February is more fickle, and discontented with his span of days and with the tardy compromise of leap-year vents his ill-humour in all kinds of moods. Now he exceeds his predecessor in coldness of reception. Have on an extra coat, to be shielded from his inclemency, and he will compel you to pull off your flannel-jacket. Adapt yourself to this freak, and on the next day your animation flags, you retire to bed before dark, mixing up 'bolasses ad'n videgar' for a 'bad code id'n der ed.' And oh! how disagreeable is a 'code id de ed!' Cheeks hot, pulse leaping at the wrist, eyes as full of tears, which occasion no sympathy, as a crocodile's in the river Nile. 'Anne, bring a crash-towl and a pail of hot water, and put some ashes in it. Aigh! I'm scalded! Make some catnip-tea, or rather a whid'n'sky punch; I'm wretched. Good-night!'

But if the snow abounds, the plentiful peppering pellets do not so unpitifully pelt you as before, nor are its fine particles so often driven over the surface, forming drifts to skirt the edges of the high way, and leave the middle of the road bare. Neither does

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it squeak under the runner, nor crackle and crunch under the foot; but wherever you have planted the ferule of your cane, the little cistern is filled up with a reflection of the cerulean sky. Now it is fit to be formed into monuments, or to be hurled from the hand of sportive school-boys over the play-ground palisades. Now it is becoming to look out for your crown, or for your smarting ears, whether you are accompanied by the merry 'bells, bells, bells,' as EDGAR has it, or walk thoughtlessly beneath the eaves, from which descends the sliding avalanche. It is unpleasant to be dodging snow-balls. Unpleasant is the choral laugh which greets you from the sunny door-way. Keep your temper. The month has attained its majority; the sweet blue-bird has more than once ventured to carol on the leafless apple-tree in the orchard; the snows are of a melting character, albeit they fall with still profuser largess, as if the heavens were coming down upon the plains of Muscovy. A week ago I remember seeing the snow-banks in the sky, and toward night the courier-flakes began to fall. Presently the earth was flecked with those white spangles, star-like spatches, delicately marked and softly falling, as if they had been the foot-prints of pure angels, till, as the sun went down, the clouds discharged their

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fleecy cargo, with scarce an interval between the flakes; and in an instant, from the river's margin to the summit of the distant hills, there was drawn noiselessly over the earth a sheet, a shroud so white 'as no fuller on earth could whiten it.'

Oh! splendid spectacle of the falling snow, looking at it through the crusted panes, beyond the mimic arts to represent it! I was fifteen miles from home, and with only the light of the young moon aloft, started, in the teeth of the storm, on my return journey through the Highland defiles. A cold wind drove it into our faces, and kept the eye-lashes in continual motion to wink off the great flakes, which flitted continually, 'like doves to the windows.' My competent and careful guide, his hands wrapped in mittens, his head crouching upon his shoulder, with difficulty glancing from under the rim of his hat, and striving to see through the blinding mist, as safely guided me over the trackless road as the faithful Mameluke once guided the Emperor over the plains of Russia. Such a journey has its recreation. Tucked in with the skins of buffaloes and of the spotted leopard, and with head enveloped like an Egyptian mummy's, from a loop-hole in the moth-eaten woollen tippet I caught satisfying glimpses of snow-pictures, peeping from behind the veil, and falling back to revel in the

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luxury of their suggestive fancies. All the land-marks were disappearing, the trees put on again their feathery costume, and the aromatic haystacks, which had been heaped up in the sweltering hotness of summer, were dimly visible, like chaste pyramids under the misty moon. Cold confines the body to a place of snug comfort, but Imagination flies, like a Lapland lover with his rein-deer, over the glassy plains. I would not change my meditations in that cold sleigh-ride—no, not for those which I have had upon a summer porch all overrun with sweet vines and clematis; or in a swinging hammock, where, through the leaves of June, I saw the waves of the sea twinkle. The storm became aggravated as we passed through the mountain-gaps; cold, cold, cold the wind blew, for there it came over 'the river;' the large flakes combined, and fell into our laps on the skins of the buffalo and spotted leopard. Lulled by the jingling bells, I withdrew my eye from the loop-hole, threw the responsibility upon him who held the reins, and, without exchanging a single word, relapsed into reverie. Then, as ever on like occasions, did all my bookish, boyish voyaging by winter fire-side to northern climes come back to memory, but over-arched with a richer glow than of the aurora-borealis. I saw the white-bear leaping

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on the polar ices; sly, universal Reynard at his tricks; and all the waltzing animals in that dim twilight, and the eider-duck brooding on its nest among the inaccessible, Icelandic rocks. I was a witness of the spouting Geiser; and from the top of Hecla, over fields of lava and chaotic masses, and glaciers where a human foot had never trod, and all the amphitheatre of snow-covered hill-tops to the sea, looked down upon a prospect wild, torpid, passionless, but sublime. Back again, with the swiftness of lightning, to the other hemisphere, with McKenzie, I saw the Esquimaux, wrapped up in furs, standing alone upon a bleak rock; then sailing with Parry on the coasts of Melville Island, through Lancaster Sound, in Baffin's Bay, along the shores of Greenland, even to the dreary town of Julianshaab. Thence I voyaged in a ship, to see the Knisteneaux, and to be drawn in sledges to the trading-stations where the factors dwell, by the docile dogs of Labrador; over the sea again, just touching at the Hebrides, the Orkneys, the Shetland, the Faroes, and at the Luffoden Islands, to winter in Archangel. Archangel, on the White Sea, used to be a place after my own heart. Spitzbergen and Nova Zembla, Siberia and the steppes of Russia, the golden domes of Moscow, 'that great

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city, Napoleon on the Kremlin ramparts wrapped in conflagration—these passed along like pictures of an hyperborean panorama.

There is some charm in barrenness. Madame Pfeiffer caught two honey-bees in Iceland, and from the chinks of Hecla the queer adventurous woman derived a jar of sweets more rare and surfeiting than those compacted by the winged confectioners of Hybla or Hymettus. I wish to travel and see the world. Oh! for one short month in those shivering regions where Madame went, though one short year or one short life would not suffice to tell the wonders of the land! Thus it doth appear why the UNKNOWN involves an essential element of the true Sublime, because it has a vasty proportion, of which Discovery can afford no unit of measure; and as fast as we stretch into it, we perceive that its objects are colossal, and beyond our grasp. All the Seven Wonders hide their diminished heads. Well may we tremble in awe upon its verge—for there the spirit of its greatness broods upon us, and 'Darkness which makes all our bones to quake.' When will the veil be uplifted from our ignorance, and Knowledge, in despite of Roman guards, like a white-robed angel, roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

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But the difficult spots of earth are the very birth-spots of nobility, even as Africa is the arid nursing place of lions. In the romantic regions of the polar seas, where Gothic matter piles its obstacles against the advance of mind, methought I saw the mariners searching for Sir JOHN FRANKLIN. Through over-arching bridges of sea-green ice, splitting with re-verberations into fragments soon after the ships passed underneath ; through grinding bergs illumin-ated by occasional flashes from the distant jokul or the northern aurora ; through 'cerulean,' but not fictitious *Symphlegades*, where the rocks kept coming together every instant, and only a keen-eyed helmsman could shoot the ship ; the American Pine still nodding to the steadfast hearts cased up in English Oak ; the bows all turned with fixed de-termination where an 'open sea' has been laid out in charts, I fancied that they voyaged on—the mar-iners searching for Sir John Franklin ! Nor will that task be unaccomplished. A prophet's voice forewarns us that it cannot be that GOD will disre-gard the prayers accompanied with such sublime endeavour. The time is not far distant when the ices will relax their grasp, and brave companions be clasped in each other's arms, and the triumphant ships shall sail away with their most precious

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freight, and 'all the bells in England, from Land's End to JOHN o' GROAT, ring forth a merry peal on the return of BELCHER's Expedition.' * *

Presently I was recalled from reveries such as these by crossing a bridge which spanned a mountain-gap. Underneath, at the distance of a hundred feet, a stream, swollen by the winter floods, rolled on with a loud noise from water-fall to water-fall on its winding way; and the illuminated windows of the factories, which, built of stone, rose to the height of six or seven stories, and whose foundations were like solid rocks upon its marge, cast a glare of light upon the foaming water, the rocks, the icicles, and all the features of the Titanic glen.

Removing the tippet, I looked down for a moment on this place, whose grandeur had impressed me strongly when seen by the light of day. The mill-flumes were in motion, and the operatives were still at work, and I heard the hum of labor above the roaring of the storm, going steadily on in those high lofts on the edge of the precipice. The Utilitarian spirit has no regard for the Beautiful or the Picturesque. It sweeps away the solemn forests, and disturbs with everlasting din the places dear to Contemplation, 'pensive maid.' Here, however, it had not succeeded in destroying the features of the place;

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for the buildings seem to be a part of the very rocks through the fissures of which the water gashes its way, and their perpendicular walls make the gorge look more deep. At some distance farther on, the same stream takes a considerable leap, and I heard its voice, although I saw it not, for its cataract was not illumined by artificial light. The day before I had noticed the white slabs of ice through the transparent sheet upon its edge, on the smooth surface of which the sun was reflected as on a polished mirror. Here is a vast ruin. A high chimney stands apart, like a shot-tower on the cliff, and near by are the dismantled walls of a factory, where the fire has done its work. The labourers had ceased, and the watchman had sounded his midnight cry, 'All's well!' upon the walls, when a suffocating smoke pervaded all the place. Clambering to the belfry, he tolled the alarm, and as its solemn appeal awoke the sleeping inhabitants of the glen, the flames burst forth and illumined all the mountain tops. The watchman sank and perished on the portals, as he attempted to make his exit, with the iron-keys in his hand. As we passed the spot, I thought of the perils of the guardians of the night, and that I would not—no, for lumps of gold—be one of those who walk their lonely rounds in the small hours

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perhaps to see a robber skulk beneath the walls, or the sly flame licking the roof with its tongue. I should be afraid—afraid! Oh! the fire is a great enemy to cope with; and wherever the seed-sparks are wafted on the winds, they bloom out marvellously, but their harvest is destruction and waste. I have risen up and pressed my face against the glaring panes in the city, beholding with admiration the hot billows, above which I have seen the pigeons, frightened from their eaves, flying on wings of fire, and the jets shoot up from the saltpetre heaps, waiting for the crash of some great dome, beneath which was a white statue rocking on its pedestal; while perhaps the sculptor among the crowd beheld his work encircled in a halo of beauty.

The storm of which I have spoken, was accompanied at the farther north by the unusual phenomenon of thunder and sharp lightning, which produced a wild, unearthly brilliance as it imbued the mass of falling snow. The atmosphere was surcharged, red balls of fire rolled about as if some demons frolicked, trees were torn up by the roots, and all things bristled with the electric fluid like a cat's back. No such doings occurred in these quarters. But soon after a galloping thaw came on, accompanied by

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smoky weather, and the atmosphere actually smelled of charred wood. There was a perpetual sound of dripping; the stream which rolls at the mountain-base so placidly in summer, scarce plentiful enough to wet the stones, and turning aside for the dry logs and trunks of trees, where turtles sun themselves, swelled gradually above its banks, reached to the over-arching limbs, where ring-doves built their nests, and wafted about their light cradles. Then the meadow became changed to a navigable lake, where scare-crows were above their heads, and one might cling for salvation to a hay-cock; while here and there, floating about on the deep, lo! some milk-pail, taken by surprise, or some hen-coop launched upon a distant voyage. The water began to creep in narrow pools across the high-way; and as the melted snows continued to roll down the mountains, filling all the gullies and wiping out the sheep-tracks, and copious rains succeeded, DEUCALION'S Deluge appeared to be renewed. At night the darkness was impenetrable, and it was as still as death, until about midnight I heard a steady roar among the mountains, quite as loud as the fall of a heavy cataract or the beating of breakers on the sea-coast. It was the wind-afar off in the forests advancing by slow degrees, and in due time it arrived, and less

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sullenly and monotonously howled about the house until the cock-crowing, when it suddenly ceased, and became so quiet, that I can compare it with nothing but a lamb lulled on the breast of its mother.

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XI.

March, 1858.

ONCE more the trees are all covered, and the Ice-King comes bedecked with gems. Through the day a cold sun shone, and did not dissolve the frost-work; and at night I walked through an enchanted grove, with the full round moon aloft. A profound stillness reigned abroad, for I heard not a billow beat, and not a sound murmur, only the crackle of the icy tubes and crusted leaves beneath the feet. The eye danced confusedly among the

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spangles and clusters of glassy fruitage, where all the softened glory of the night appeared to wreak itself, and the pure bosom of every pearl-drop was made the residence of a star. I picked up a handful of fallen globules, and saw the satellite's image.

How tranquilly and how beautifully do the heavens come down to rest on every object save the blurred heart of man! The earth violates no law, and GOD mirrors HIMSELF upon its surface, and there is no dew-drop so small that it could not show a picture of all the worlds which HE has made. And here methought that the dissolution of light into its original prismatic colours is like the dissolving of all things pure and good; ever waxing more saintly beautiful as they lapse into more ethereal forms, when their vital intensity and strength appear to die away. These beams, which were the descendants of the sun, transferred to the spiritual brightness of the moon, flickered away in the bosom of the ice-drops like the colours which grace the plumes of a departing angel in its flight. And how marvellous the transformation of created things! Here in this grove had I rambled like a spirit to some well-loved haunting-place in summer, when the trees were plumply budding, and the blossoms of the wild grape gave a good smell; here tracked

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the by-path through opposing brambles to some choice bower, or sat beside the dripping stones where the waters of the brook murmured; here, lulled to quietude, stood still beneath the branching elm to hear the dashing of the airy surf, and thread the delicious notes of every wild bird through the mazes of concerted song; here in the suggestive hurry of the moment, how vainly drew the ivory tablets to receive the pictures which I had no hand to pencil, and the poem which I had no power to write! And now, how changed the scene since the prompting-whistle of the winter gave its piercing summons for the green curtain to be withdrawn;—and as I saw the shafts and over-arching limbs of elms and veteran oaks encased in icy armour, through which the mottled moonbeams shone upon the path, I felt like one who trod among the abodes of Genii, and the illusions of a Fairy-land. Oh, ye ice and snow, bless ye the LORD! praise HIM and magnify HIM for ever! On the morrow a new scene awaited me.

Have you ever gazed upon the noble river when it has been congealed down to the very caves and pores of the earth, out of which its living streams bubble? It is a spectacle not less worthy of admiration than when it flashes unimpeded in the sum-

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mer's sun. I went down to its yet frozen marge, and desired to cross over. The great slabs of ice which had first floated on the current from its source in the high north, forced one above another where they had been intercepted by the projecting shore, lay as far as the eye could reach in wild and chaotic confusion. I had myself seen them when loose, grinding and jostling and leaping over each other, pushing in advance of them with a shovelling sound a mass of pounded ice, they became banked up on the shores; and it now looked as if these wide-strewn and gigantic blocks had been hewn from some Arctic quarry, or as if here a crystal city had been laid waste,

> "With all its towers, and domes, and cathedrals,
> In undistinguishable overthrow"

Then came the thought that all these rocky ruins were but a portion of the liquid waves which lately kissed the shore with scarce a murmur, and again the transformation should be brought about. They should be changed into an element so light as to be wafted in company with the feather, or to buoy up the stem of a lily in its cove. Nature is the great magician, after all; and from 'cold Obstruction's apathy,' unto the loving warmth and light of life,

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her processes are all miracles as much as when a dead man is raised from the sepulchre; not more. One is more astounding than the other, but God works both in the development of his glorious and immutable laws.

The frozen surface of the river, at the point where I stood, was inconceivably jagged and wild, like its ice-bound coasts, (save here and there a smooth, slippery plane,) as if it had been frozen when a crisp breeze was blowing; consisting of slabs of snow-ice cemented roughly, intercepted snow-banks, rude, unsightly masses jutting up, sharp splinters and candescent pinnacles as far as the eye could reach, all glittering in the sun; but in the centre, the powerful current, struggling to throw off its manacles, had forced a way, and rolled on freely to the sea. Thus was the bridge broken; and the gigantic effort was going on, for I heard the great mass split with a sound like thunder, followed by a track of rainbow-colours and feathery pencillings of light throughout the passage of the entire cleft. I stood uncertain upon the brink, when two ferry-men approached, and without the offer of 'a silver crown,' engaged to carry me to the opposite bank in safety. Their boat was fixed on temporary runners. When I had embarked and sat down in

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the middle seat, they threw off their coats, although the air was sharp, and fastened on their feet thongs pierced with sharp nails. Seizing the boat at each end, they dragged it with difficulty over the rough parts, glibly and on the full run over the smooth ice, among the skating boys; and presently we approached the lip of thin ice on the borders of the stream. Here the advancement became ticklish—and it required no small dexterity to effect the launch. 'Try it a little farther up the stream,' said the boatman, and accordingly they pushed along to seek for an eligible spot for getting out into clear water. The way in which the boatmen effected it was this: one sat on the bow as he would on a horse, trying the strength of the thin glass before him with his feet, the other pushed on the outside from the stern. This caused no small rocking, and I began to protest earnestly against this polar-navigation, and to dread the fate of Sir John Franklin. Once or twice the adventurous ferryman had his foot in, and at last, when the ice gave way under the pressure of the boat, and he drew in his legs, the other continued to push until he also jumped suddenly in and nearly upset the boat. I informed the captain and the mate that had I known their tactics, I should not have put my life

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in jeopardy. They replied that 'any business was safe arter you had got accustomed to it;' and taking each a chew of tobacco, they pushed the loose ice aside, the larger cakes with the heels of their boots, and at last took to their oars in the open sea. The landing on the ice was again effected in a like manner, only that the helms-man embarked first. Very glad was I to reach the opposite coast, and I made a vow on the deck of a canal-boat—on which I had the good luck to scramble—by all the spires of Newburgh, to invoke the aid of steam when I should be ready to re-cross the river.

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FIFTEENTH.—Still the winter lingers, although it relaxes its hold, and the ploughshare has become burnished in the furrow, and 'the ploughman homeward plods his weary way.' The sap runs up in the maple, and the stems of the brook-willows look as yellow as gold. The purple shadows lie beautiful on the mountains, where the forests are just budding, while on a sunny day the blue-birds come out in multitudes from the holes in the apple trees, and make the orchards vocal with their rich, velvet notes. Blue-bird is the precursor of spring-tide, the emblem of hope, and the violet of the air. I

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love to see him shake his indigo wings on a chilly Sunday morning on my way to church; and although his song is reduced to a single plaintive note in autumn, there is, as I may say, but a narrow strip of icy weather between the pauses of his roundelay. He is with us when the crisp and yellow leaves are falling, and he returns to warble before the trees begin to bud. He is seldom shot at, and enjoys deservedly a perfect freedom of the air.

'To see a fellow on a summer's morning'

aim his gun at such a bird as this, would be enough to rouse the heirs of AUDUBON, or the shade of WILSON, at the sound of his detested volley. For this bird, WILSON, is thy *Sialia Wilsonii*, and not unworthy to be described in scientific language, down to his very toes: "Feet rather stout; his toes of moderate length; the outer toe united at the base; the inner free; hind toe the strongest.' But now, while Blue-bird sings, the sun has vanished, the clouds fly hurry-scurry, the snows fall criss-cross, and the small white pellets bounce upon the sod, and show a disposition to gather in angles and at the house-corners; for March goes out with the

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weeping, whining, whimpering, whimsical moods which belong to April and early May.

At this season of the year, when the recurrence of every pleasant day makes you to feel as if you had the fee-simple of the summer; and when, with an ill-temper, you again meet the exacerbating winds which blow from ice-bergs or mountains sprinkled with the snows, there is no place of resort more pleasant than on the threshing-floor, within the open folding-doors of a big barn. It is a nook which draws the sun; and in the yard, covered knee-deep with chaff, stands the mullowing cow, with her little white-speckled offspring at her side, licking its soft fur with motherly affection; while the lordly cock scratches for hid treasures; and the hens, whose combs have freshly sprouted and have a sanguine colour, utter the well-known sounds indicative of fresh eggs in the spring: 'CUTARCUT!—cut—cut—cut—cut—cut—cut—c'tarcut! Cutarcut!—cut—cut—cut—cut—cut—cut—cut—cutarcut!'

This reminds me that an effort has been lately made, upon a pitch-dark night, by some persons destitute of moral principle, to steal my fowls. But the great muscular energy of the Shanghais was sufficient to break the bandages with which they had been secured, and I found them with the strings dang-

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ling about their legs in the morning. I have received a present of a pair of Cochin-Chinas, a superb cock and a dun-colored hen. I put them with my other fowls in the cellar, to protect them for a short time from the severity of the weather. My Shanghai rooster had for several nights been housed up; for on one occasion, when the cold was snapping, he was discovered under the lee of a stone-wall, standing on one leg, taking no notice of the approach of any one, and nearly gone. When brought in, he backed up against the red-hot kitchen-stove, and burnt his tail off. Before this he had no feathers in the rear to speak of, and now he is bob-tailed indeed. ANNE sewed upon him a jacket of carpet, and put him in a tea-box for the night; and it was ludicrous on the next morning to see him lifting up his head above the square prison-box, and crowing lustily to greet the day But before breakfast-time he had a dreadful fit. He retreated against the wall, he fell upon his side, he kicked and he 'carried on;' but when the carpet was taken off, he came to himself, and ate corn with a voracious appetite. His indisposition was no doubt occasioned by a rush of blood to the head from the tightness of the bandages. When Shanghai and Cochin met together in the cellar, they enacted in that dusky hole all the barba

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rities of a profane cock-pit. I heard a sound as if from the tumbling of barrels, followed by a dull, thumping noise, like spirit-rappings, and went below, where the first object which met my eye was a mouse creeping along the beam out of an excavation in my pine-apple cheese. As for the fowls, instead of salutation after the respectful manner of their country—which is expressed thus: SHANG knocks knees to COCHIN, bows three times, touches the ground, and makes obeisance—they were engaged in a bloody fight, unworthy of celestial poultry. With their heads down, eyes flashing and red as vipers, and with a feathery frill or ruffle about their necks, they were leaping at each other, to see who should hold dominion of the ash-heap. It put me exactly in mind of two Scythians or two Greeks in America, where each wished to be considered the only Scythian or only Greek in the country. A contest or emulation is at all times highly animating and full of zest, whether two scholars write, two athletes strive, two boilers strain, or two cocks fight. Every lazy dog in the vicinity is immediately at hand. I looked on until I saw the Shanghai's peepers darkened, and his comb streaming with blood. These birds contended for some days after for pre-eminence, on the lawn, and no flinching could be observed on

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either part, although the Shanghai was by one-third the smaller of the two. At last the latter was thoroughly mortified; his eyes wavered and wandered vaguely, as he stood opposite the foe; he turned tail and ran. From that moment he became the veriest coward, and submitted to every indignity without attempting to resist. He suffered himself to be chased about the lawn, fled from the Indian meal, and was almost starved. Such submission on his part at last resulted in peace, and the two rivals walked side by side without fighting, and ate together with a mutual concession of the corn. This, in turn engendered a degree of presumption on the part of the Shanghai cock; and one day, when the dew sparkled and the sun shone peculiarly bright, he so far forgot himself as to ascend a hillock, and venture on a tolerably triumphant crow. It showed a lack of judgment: his cock-a-doodle-doo proved fatal. Scarcely had he done so, when Cochin-China rushed upon him, tore out his feathers, and flogged him so severely, that it was doubtful whether he would 'remain with us.' Now, alas! he presents a sad spectacle; his comb frozen off, his tail burnt off, and his head knocked to a jelly. While the corn jingles in the throats of his compeers, when they eagerly snap it, as if they were eating from a pile of shilling-

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pieces or fi'penny-bits, he stands aloof, and grubs in the barren ground. How changed!

Last summer I had bad luck in raising chickens. A carriage ran over and crushed five or ten young innocents, and the shrill cries of the hen were like lamentations in Rama. Sitting in my study, I heard the voice of FEL-O-RA, saying 'Ah! dear little sweet creatures! One killed—two killed—three killed. Ah! poor, run-over, dear, dead little creatures! Ah! here's another!—ah! ah! ah! ah!' And with a succession of ah's, did FLORA lift up her hands over the dead chickens, while the tears ran down her red English cheeks. Could I be protected from the abandoned chicken-stealer and roost-thief who carries a bag on his shoulder on a misty night, to depopulate the coops, and take from you all which is left from casualty, from the pip and the gapes, then would I be encouraged to establish a model Cennery, to be visited by all the neighbours round. But there is little virtue extant in the country, which is the very spot where her pure model ought to be. One would think, that where the grass grows, the streams run, the trees blossom, the birds warble, and the bees hum, there would be no stealing, except the innocent delights which the senses steal from the song of the birdlings, from

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the fragrance of the honey-suckle or the rose. But in the very place where there ought to be a cottage over-run with sweet vines, there you see the deep-laid foundations of a fortress inhabited by eight hundred rogues. In it the incipient coop-robber is himself cooped up, having been by degrees developed into the full-blown wretch. He who will pull down a fowl by the legs from his neighbour's corn-crib, will at last be guilty of any depravity of which the human heart is capable. It is not too much to say, that half the zest of living in the country is impaired by the annoyance of the detested thieves and poachers, who find you out even in the most sacred and retired spots. For whensoever your grapes blush to one another, and your fruits wear the ruddy hue of ripeness, and your melons are at the picking-point, you pay your morning visit to the garden and find them gone. Last year I had a solitary peach upon a solitary tree, for the early frost frustrated the delicious crop. This only one, which from its golden colour, might be entitled El Dorado, I watched with fear and trembling from day to day, patiently waiting for the identical time when I should buoy it up carefully in my hand, that its pulp should not be bruised, tear off its thin peel, admonished that the time had come by a gradual

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releasing of the fruit from its adhesion to the stem, and I appointed the next day for the ceremonial of plucking. The morrow dawned, as bright a day as ever dawned upon the earth, and on a near approach I found it still there, and said, with chuckling gratification, 'There is some delicacy in thieves.' Alas! on reaching it, somebody had taken a large bite out of the ripest cheek, but with a sacrilegious witticism had left it sticking to the stem. The detestible prints of the teeth which bit it were still in it, and a wasp was gloating at its core. Had he taken the whole peach, I should have vented my feelings in a violence of indignation unsuited to a balmy garden. But as he was joker enough to bite only its sunny side, I must forgive him, as one who has some element of salvation in his character, because he is disposed to look at the bright side of things. What is a peach? A mere globe of succulent and delicious pulp, which I would rather be deprived of than cultivate bad feelings, even towards thieves. Wherever you find rogues whose deeds involve a saline element of wit, make up your mind that they are no rogues. That is the moral. From what I have said some lessons may be learned by your mere fantastic novices, who pop down suddenly in some box in the country, expecting verily to find an ely-

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sium on earth. They have the most extravagant dreams about pure milk, choice air, fresh vegetables, plenty of poultry, fine fruit: but when they come, they will find out that even there, all milk will not gather cream; all the winds are not impregnated with health; all peas are not Prince ALBERT'S; all the market is not at their command; all the fruits of the earth may disappoint their promise; and that there is as much need of good humour in the country as in any place under heaven. Oh, how 'weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable' life is without an allowing heart, to smile on apparent wrongs, and to have a grateful sense of GOD'S goodness! Bad is a most precious element, and enhances the good.

EIGHTEENTH.—Saw a dove.

NINETEENTH.—To-day ANNE brought in, with an air of triumph, two PHŒBE-BIRDS, sometimes called pe-wees, caught in the loft of the barn. She held one in each hand, while their black heads and twinkling eyes appeared out of the port hole made by her thumb and fore-finger. They were extremely frightened, and it is enough to touch a heart of stone to see a little bird tremble. PHŒBE always builds under cover; the wings are dusky, bosom brown, and tail slightly emarginate. It is a modest little bird, of a plain, Quaker aspect, and with nothing particu-

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lar to distinguish it; but on that very account I have always admired the pe-wee. For although he is very simple in his manners, and has no voice, and his plumage is extremely dusky, he is one of the earliest visitants in our latitudes in the spring-time of the year. Beside this, he throws himself on your hospitality and protection; and if you have a spare shed, or loft, or barn, in which there is room for a nest, there the PHŒBE-bird is sure to come, because he must be under cover. I was lying upon the sofa reading Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, when ANNE came in, and I told her to let the two birds go. She opened her hands, and they flew about the room, dashing against the window-panes, the looking-glass, and the astral-lamp. At last they flew out of the open door, and returned to the loft, where they are now building a nest. Their eggs are white, slightly spotted with red.

TWENTIETH.—The day being balmy, I started on a pedestrian excursion through the woods and fields, and along the river's marge, to dine with ——. I was within half a mile of the place, walking in a narrow road which lay up a steep hill, and on the left was a water-brook, bordered with willows and a thick wood. The wood was separated from the road by a picket-fence. Just before reaching this

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spot, I met at short intervals two snakes. The first I let go. He was a garter-snake, squirming about in the dusty path But the other I killed, and tossed him to a distance on the ferule of my cane. The first I yielded to the quality of mercy, the second sacrificed to the sterner attribute of justice. Scarcely had I dispatched him, when my ear caught the sound of a heavy tramp or movement in the grove—and looking in the direction of the sound, lo! an enormous snapping-turtle, with outstretched neck about the thickness of a man's wrist. I was over the pickets in the twinkling of an eye, and got between him and the brook, lest he should scramble in. He did not budge. I stood beside him, and he was my prize. Had I fished for him ten years, I never should have got him, and now, as I looked down upon him, was astonished at his magnitude. He took it in very bad part that he was captured, and snapped the cane, which I held with so tight a hold, that I was enabled to drag him into the middle of the road. He was no turtle-dove in temper. His tail was of enormous thickness at the base, and about two-thirds of a foot in length; his paws of similar proportions, and exceeding fat; and from the tip of his nose to the tip of his tail, he measured about two feet. After getting him on his back, it

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was a subject of some moments' serious reflection how to carry with immunity this great monster, who could bite off a man's finger in the twinkling of an eye. I made experiments as to the circumference in which his claws and his neck could stretch and circumbend. Then I seized him boldly by the tip-scales of his tail, and lifting him from the ground, all the joints and articulations of that member relaxing one after another, and cracking under his great weight, I carried him at arm's-length, now in the right hand, now in the left, having much precaution for the calves of my legs. Thus I got him to the house, and laid him on the lawn in front of the house, on his back. Here a jury was summoned to decide upon his merits; and it was a matter of argument whether to bring him at once to the block, or to set him cruising among the tit-bits of the slop-pail, to get his musk out, and qualify him for the future tureen. The latter course was deemed judicious. He weighed eight pounds. So much for catching a turtle.

TWENTY-FIRST.—Notwithstanding the eddying clouds of dust, and the damp, raw winds, which almost cut you to the bone, this is a hopeful, pleasant season of the year. The natural world by many a sign and symptom gives notice that it is waking up.

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The lively and loquacious cackling of the barn-yard fowls, *cutarcut!* responding to the asseveration of distant *cutarcut!* the clarified crow of the roosters, the perpetual blaa-ing of calves, the familiar scolding appeals to oxen in the fields: 'Gee! haw! buck! You know better 'n that! I tell you to haw! come areound!'—all these announce that the summer is nigh at hand. About the twentieth of March the bull-frogs will be sometimes out in full chorus; at least, some of the peepers, but the eel-frogs hang back until it is time to bob for eels. These make a trilling sound, very different from the peepers or big blood-an-oons. It is like the continued springing of a watchman's rattle. The bull-frogs, it is said, come out several times and go back again. They must see their way clear through the bogs before venturing permanently out of the profound mud. It is an adage that they must three times look through their spectacles, or glass windows, (that is, through the ice,) before they sing in full concert. Then the peepers begin in a high key, with a singularly sweet and lucid voice, somewhere betwixt a silver-whistle and a glass-bell, smacking little of the mud: "Eep-eep-eep! ee ee-ee! eepee! eepee-peepeep! peep-eep! eepepee! eepepee! ee pepee!' accompanied by a few trills long continued,

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and a whole rabble of gluckers; but the big bassoon accompaniment comes afterward, and then you hear all the several kinds at once, an entertainment not unpleasing to musical ears:

'Gluckluck! gluckluck! gluckluck! Luckluck! luckluck! luckkluck! Uckluck! uckluck! uckluck! Goluck! goluck! goluck! goluck! Goluckle! goluckle! goluckle! Gluckle! gluckle! Locklock glock glock glock glock! Ukuk uk uk! Ukker, ukker! gluck luck! Eep! eep! eep! eep! eep! eep! eep! eep! Ur r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r! Doubloon! Doubloon—oon! oon! oon! gluckluck! gluckluck eep! eep! weep! peep-peep! peep-peep! Kax-kax! kax-kax-kekek, kekek Ek-ek! ek-ek! Brek-kek! brek-kek! Kwax-kwax! kuax-kuax! uk-uk! uk-uk-uk! kuax-kuax! ek-ek! ek-ek, uk-uk, gluckluck, gluckluck, goluckle, goluckle, goluckle, quockle-quockle, quockle-quockle! Ockle, ockle, ockle-ockle! Ocka-ooka! ocka, ocka, lockle, lockle, ockalockle, ockalockle! Ockwog, eepeep, eep eep!—BOLOONK! Boloonx———*Bloonk! Enck!* blockblock, blockblock, blockblock, ockalocle, bluckbluck goluckiegoluckle gluckgluk ukukuk kuax kuax kuax!'

And so they go on, not to do them injustice, all night long, to the best of their ability, singing their Maker's praises in their marshy paradise. When I have sometimes looked at the unsightly swamp, the quaking bogs, the stagnant muck, and all the green and grassy scum, the nursing-place of chills, quatern agues, typhus, typhoid, intermittent, remittent, and bilious fever, it is a wonder that music should proceed from such a dismal theatre. Do the epicures know that they are eating poison with the hind-legs of bull-frogs? Then let this insinuation cause them to desist; or if not, at least a feeling of

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shame when they discover the slender bones on which the small amount of delicate flesh gathers Is it worth while for a gluttonous stomach to send out deputies to hunt the marshes for the mere hind-legs of these creatures, butchering off whole orchestras in a single day? Were I the owner of a pond of bull-frogs, I would sue a poacher for killing my bull-frogs as quickly as for killing my bobolinks. It is a sickly and depraved appetite which must feed on nightingales. The winding and transparent cells of the ingeniously-constructed ear require food for their digestion as much as the big dark cavern of the stomach, where the bull-dog gastric-juices of a hale man will tear to pieces the stoutest integuments, or even nails, as quick as vinegar will dissolve pearls. In all probability the ear will be starved, if the hunting-grounds are limited to the edge of marshes, and if the game-laws have no reference to bull-dogs. It is pardonable to knock dogs in the head with bludgeons during the dog-days: for

'Dogs delight to bark and bite;
It is their nature, too.'

But bull-frogs do no harm, except when eaten—and then they're poison: the wind under their

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cheeks is full of fever and ague. It is much more pleasant to hear their paludinal *brek-kek, brek-kek! kuaxkuax!* upon a summer evening, than to see their legs served up at the tables of the effeminate. It it amusing to walk upon the water's edge, and mark their big probulgent green eyes sticking out from where they sun themselves, on a stone or a peninsular-bog, or leap off severally, with a shrill and startling *koax!* when footsteps shake the sod. There is one experiment worth trying. Select a big full-grown bull-frog, approach softly in the rear—no, first go into the house, and ask if there is such a thing in it as a feather-bed, for feather-beds are so disagreeable and unhealthy, that they are somewhat out of fashion. But in many places in the country they still use them, especially in the guest-chamber, in July and August—feather beds and cotton sheets. Tell the landlady that you want a feather, if she can spare one, to try an experiment with a bull-frog. She will of course ask you what you want to do with a bull-frog, and try to laugh you out of it. It is no matter; if there is no feather bed, then you go into the barn-yard, and look about until you have found a piece of down. If you cannot find any, return home and obtain a quill, unless you make use of steel-pens. In that case, call at

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any farmer's, and buy a small quill. Let no proud utilitarian sneer at the very idea of making an experiment with bull-frogs. They illustrate galvanism, but this experiment has no reference whatever to galvanism. It is, however, curious. It has been tried, and if dexterously performed, it will succeed. You take the quill in your hand, approach the frog softly in the rear—perhaps he is one of those gorgeous and ornamental ones, tricked out in gold earrings; all the better. Don't let him steal a march on you, and hop so suddenly as to frighten you out of your wits, and get your foot wet. Go behind him, and gently tickle him with the feather on the back of his head. He will not budge; on the contrary, he will whine and cry most piteously, just like a little child: '*Aigh! yaigh! yaigh! yaigh!*' If you go too fast, he will click his jaws two or three times, crying, '*Imm! imm! immur!*' and then souse down with a *blockbluck!* splash!

The largest bull-frogs which I have ever known are on the coasts of Connecticut in the town of Norwalk. Sitting on the piazza of the hotel a summer or two ago, I heard them toward sun-down from their head-quarters in the neighbouring mill-pond: 'Doub-le-oon! double-oon! doubleoon!' The noise which they make is astounding, full as

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loud as an ordinary Bashan bull; and if it could be controlled, might be made use of for practical purposes, to call men from factories. They are about as large as a grown rabbit, and the nativity of the oldest must date back as far as to the days of Cotton Mather, or the Rev. Jonathan Edwards. The supply of wind in their cheeks is almost equal to that of a small organ in a country church. The compass of their voice is about three miles, and all their dimensions exaggerated in the extreme.

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XII.

April 20

I WAS much amused to-day by the antics of a herd of young heifers who held possession of a wheatfield, led on by the pertinacity of a little bull. His forehead was just turgescent with the coming horns, but he roared with the lusty voice of a young lion, and galloped furiously from pursuit, throwing up the clods and waving his tail in

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the air. I was walking in the garden, looking with a hopeful eye upon the sprouting dock-leaves and the peeping buds of the gooseberry-bushes, when awakened from my meditations by loud bellowing, accompanied by the cry of 'Coof! coof!' and the angry protestations of the farmer and his boys. The field of wheat was green and tempting, presenting a solitary patch of verdure, for the hardy blade flourishes in the cold soil. It had already solicited the appetite of a street-hog, who would make his daily inroad, nudging up the bars with his strong snout, or squeezing his body underneath them through a narrow space, enough to break his bones, or tear out all the bristles on his back. Day by day the porker was driven from the field, but to the young heifers the green blade was so appetizing that they were loth to give it up. The Farmer had taken down the bars, and several times, with great industry, got the cattle in a corner, when the little bull impatiently threw up his heels, rushed past the guards with irresistible violence, and immediately the whole herd broke. This process was repeated half a dozen times, until the success of the rebellion and resolute conduct of the heifers invested the affair with a degree of excitement. Sitting on a rail, I laughed at the angry farmers, and wished well to the efforts

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of the ring-leader bull. With what appetite the flock grazed in the field corners when the pursuers were afar off!—and on the approach of the latter, the irruption was like that of buffaloes on the plains. It was not without great uproar, and the calling in of additional help, and repeated cries of 'Coof! coof!' and the exhaustion of the bucolic vocabulary, that they were got out of the enclosures, the *rex gregis* leaving them with a flying vault and angry toss of the head. No doubt they preferred the succulent pasture to solitary cud-chewing in the stall. Poor little bull! In a week after, a rope was fastened about his neck, passed through an iron ring in the barn-floor, and I heard his smothered bellowings as his hornless head was drawn down, and the clattering noise which his hoofs made in his heavy fall. *Procumbit humi bos.*

I once witnessed the breaking of an immense herd of cattle coming from Weehawken down the hills to Hoboken. They tore through the streets of Jersey City with terrific violence, tossing up on their horns any stray child or old woman who could not get out of the way. Pedestrians hammered at the locked-up gates for admission, and nimbleness took possession of the knees which had bidden farewell to the springing elasticity of youth. It was a Sun-

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day eve, when the population was all in motion, and women wore the most variegated colours on their way to church. Until mid-night I heard the hoofs of the horsemen clattering through the streets, and the echo of the herdsmen's voices among the hills, collecting the cattle with those well-known coaxing cries and objurgations known to them. In all other respects, the evening was invested with a sacred stillness.

It has become a moot point whether we ought to feast upon the flesh of beasts. And never are we more inclined to take the negative of the question than when appetite begins to flag on the approach of summer, and the green and crisp things of the earth abound in gardens, and, one by one, the fruits for whose prosperity we have been so long praying, 'that in due time we may enjoy them,' appeal to the eye in the ruddy flush of their ripeness, to the smell by their pervading fragrance, and to the taste by their luscious flavor. Then do we turn away from the steaming kitchen with disgust, and abhor the greasy feast as we would the lapping of train-oil. Where the whole country is a vast ice-house, vegetation does not exist, and the body craves unguents; and even if roots and tender vegetables could be obtained, they would not suffice for its

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protection. While the summer lasts, we think it may possibly be sinful to consume flesh, but to feed upon it the year round is enough to turn men into brutes. Show us a tender-hearted butcher, and he shall have a gold cup, or ought to have one. Will he let the calves' heads hang out of the wagon, and their soft black eyes be extirpated by the grazing wheel? Will he not bear the lambs to slaughter in comfortable positions, and 'gently lead those which are with young?' Then may he ask for the hand of the shepherd's daughter, and not till then.

But I say that when the weather becomes hot, 'much meat I not desire.' It is the favorite roosting-place of flies, which make the very ointment of the apothecary to smell bad. Bread and butter is a theme, however homely, on which a volume might be written. Although the appetite may tire of other things, on this substantial ground it makes a stand. It must be trained to the liking of far-fetched cookery, while the taste acquired at so much pains, departs suddenly. Civilized men enjoy one kind of food, and cannibals another. Some are very simple in their habits, and like the boy, CYRUS, at the courtly table of his grand-father, wonder at the multitude of dishes. But no man. Christian or heathen, ever quarrels with his bread

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and butter. It is acceptable the year round, and the taste for it is universal, and never palls. You cannot eat it to a surfeit, or ever return to it with disgust. If it is of a bad quality, that does not destroy your affection. You blame the baker, but stick to the bread. *Good* bread and butter in the summer time are peculiarly delicious,—the very staff of life. When the flour is of the finest wheat, the yeast of a buoyant nature, and the loaf, with its crust properly baked, has the whiteness of snow and lightness of a sponge; when the butter has the flavour of the fresh grass and the colour of new-minted gold, eat to your heart's content, and desire nothing else. When you have come in at the noon-tide hour, wearied with your expedition to the mountain-top, your walk in the woods, your sail on the lake, or your botanizing in the meadows; when you have laboured faithfully in the garden, rooting out the weeds from the cucumbers and green peas, the sweet-corn and cauliflowers, which are to grace your table, contracting a sharp appetite from the smell of the mould; when you have returned with wood-cock from the swamp, or have been 'a fishynge;' and then the golden butter and fresh bread are set before you, garnished perhaps with a well-dressed lettuce, or a few short-top scarlet radishes, each crackling and brittle as glass,

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well may you disdain the aid of cooks, for it is a feast which an anchorite might not refuse, and which an epicure might envy!

—

MAY 20.—At the close of a sultry day it had rained copiously, and just as the violence of the storm abated into a soft and melting shower, the setting sun burst forth with brilliance, edging the dark clouds with a superb phylactery, and presently there sprang across the sky a rain-bow of surpassing beauty. Each time that it is newly bent, we welcome it anew—most precious emblem!—and almost fancy that we see the plumes of climbing angels on this JACOB'S ladder. For it shines undimmed, un faded in its primal light, as when it over-arched the lessening flood, and the weary dove first nestled among the green olive-branches.

I have stood by the mountain stream, and day by day heard the sound of the chisel and ringing of the workman's hammer, and after a long time have seen the solid arch, a miracle of human art, thrown over the fearful gulf or over the very brows of the misty cataract. But now, while you cast down your eyes and lift them up again, the vacant chasm of the air is over-bridged with slabs of radiant colours, with

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not more sound than of the falling feather; for lo! you say, 'There is a rainbow in the sky!' All great things are done without noise, and the processes of Nature are all silent. Sitting at the gate of 'the Temple which is called Beautiful,' you see the great halls of the Creation festooned with glory, and yet you could not tell when the blade shot up, or when the plant bloomed, or when the tree budded. It is like the breaking out of the morning light, beam upon beam; it is like the declension of evening, shadow upon shadow. And so I thought while looking out upon the bursting vegetation. The wet grass sparkled; the cups of the flowers were brimming full; the streams fell with a tinkling sound into the cisterns at the house corners; the trees dripped down the dews, all sweetened with the blossoms of the lilac and the apple; the birds trimmed their gay plumage, and the stems were lifted up, and all things wore a refreshed look, when suddenly out of the ink-black clouds, over against the golden sun, I beheld the broad sweep of that celestial arc —its beautiful beams laid deep down in the blue waters, and its splendid key-stone at the very zenith of the heavens!

At such times, we think of the marvellous and exact analogy which there is between the moral and

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the physical, and that both without and within there is a succession of the like changes, contrasts, relations, movements. In either province, lights and shadows make up all the pictures which we know. For there is a dark and lonesome winter of the soul, but soon we come again upon a belted space of more than vernal loveliness, when pleasant influences, graces of life, and all-abounding charities lie in our path, just like the sweet procession of the flowers; spring-times of youth and beauty, when all goes merry as a marriage-bell; and if at times we glide into the eclipse of sorrow, or struggle in the choking flood, once more the sun-shine breaks upon the scene and paints the sign of heavenly promise. Oh! when we think of what the rain-bow is the pledge, does it not seem appropriate that it should be the ideal of beauty?

> 'The airy child of vapour and the sun,
> Brought forth in purple, cradled in vermillion;
> Baptized in molten gold, and swathed in dun.'

It is because the Word of God can never fail, that those colours are never faded; and still they glow, and burn, and flicker from our sight, only to return again when the sky looks dark, with brighter promise. Thus, Champollion-like, we sit down to in

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terpret the most beautiful hieroglyphics, because we must look upon every outward phenomenon as a transfer into symbol of some deep and spiritual truth. For the whole world is a myth, and every thing which it contains is an emblem. Oh! that picture-language of the sky, the air, the sea, the earth, the flowers! Oh! that matter-full page, so inscribed with eloquence and with inspired poem! From the high mountain-top I read onward to the horizon's edge, and the rocks stand like antiquated characters; and every water-fall is a silver dash: and every stream is like the transcription of a flowing pencil. In the enamelled mead I walk along as one who holds a volume in his hand, all thickly pencilled with mysterious characters, passing from leaf to leaf, from flower to painted flower, transferring each to some celestial grace, meeting at every step a benediction. It is the one language which all may read, and to the dumb with astonishment holds up fingers. The soul of the rose flits in fragrance from its falling petals. All that is bright must fade; but, as the poet has it, the very

> ——————'ashes of the just
> Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.'

The vine clambers to the highest point, but its

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supplicating tendrils still stretch upward. So the affections wind themselves about the strongest objects of the earth, while their tenderest fibres seek support from heaven. As in the unruffled stream I see the skies mirrored, tint for tint, and shadow for shadow, so there is no transcript of a better world, save in a tranquil bosom. Walk in the quiet woods at noon-tide, guided in your path by the faint hint of former footsteps, brushing from before you the briers which almost at every step encrown your head with thorns, as well as the silver thread of spider swaying in the breeze; and there too, you will find

> 'Books in the running brooks, sermons in stones,
> And good in every thing.'

Viewed in this light, the volume before us has multitudinous pages, and there is no end of our studies; but when I look upon a rain-bow in the sky, it appears the most speaking and exquisite of all emblems: the gem-poem of the mythology of nature. Walking beneath that superb bridge, you may pick up pebbles, dip your feet in the running water-brook, and muse to your heart's content. Above you are all the several beams which, blent together, make up limpid light, all being severally the correspond-

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ences of something which is divine. I have often thought, when the waters of the flood had well subsided, and the rivers rolled in their own channels, and the command had been given to the ocean waves, 'Hither shalt thou come, and no farther,' what must have been the feelings of the sons of men when, for the first time, they contemplated that 'bow in the cloud;' and, as it appeared time after time, how fathers took their children by the hand to gaze at it. Yet it could not have been because the spectacle was new, but because it was known to be an emblem. ADAM looked upon it before NOAH, for the principle of its formation existed already. Great facts, which are intended for the soul of man, are all represented in nature by signs of the utmost tenderness. Thus we have the resurrection of all nature from its icy tumulus, the superabundant bloom and beauty of the spring. If there were not any refined state, then none of these outer forms could exist, as every type must have its antitype. The sun, the clouds, the dews, the vapour, are but the ministers of truth, and the rainbow is an *archangel.*

> 'To him who in the love of Nature holds
> Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
> A various language.'

We may perceive the coloration of rays in the

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small dew-drop which fills up the cup of a lily; nay, in the very tears which have fallen from the eyes of some poor creature, as if a smile lit them before they were dashed away by kindness.

I once saw Niagara. Once!—I ever see it; for the image of its greatness and majesty cannot pass away or cheat the memory for ever. If pastoral scenes are shifted from the view, and Alps may be forgotten, that picture, once impressed, remains indelible. Gazing upon the awful brink, where the late agitated waters become as placid as the unruffled lake, before they take the plunge, and where the very spirit of the cataract appears to dwell, I was impressed with the destructive force and fury of the element: for, except at that momentous pause, it has no phase of gentleness, but is enveloped in vapour, and accompanied by the unresembled noise of the fall. The waves of the sea may be appeased and calm, but the thunder of Niagara is unintermitted; and ever above the gulf, where the mists rise like incense, while the earth shakes, and the face of nature speaks only of great convulsion, we gaze upon the perpetual halo of the bow; and lest the setting sun should take the spectacle away, by the moon's quiet beams it is seen arching an enchanted island. And tell me, have you never walked

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upon the margin of the sea itself when the storm lowered, and fled away from the breakers as they rolled shoreward, and afterward, when the dazzling sun came out, beheld the same arc in its complete formation, with one of its abutments on the solid land, and one upon the deep waters? I have sometimes seen a fragment of it, and the same luminous colours, on the hot breath of the engines, as they rolled onward like a driven thunder-bolt: and as if to banish unbelief, wherever the power of the element is most manifest, and wherever Nature is enthroned in majesty, though clouds and darkness may hover near her, 'there is a rainbow round about her throne.'

—

JUNE 10.—No blight, no drought, no sweltering heats, no potato-bugs, no grasshopper to be a burden. This is the gem of the century, the pearl of years. It runneth faster in its delightful progression, and wins the crown of flowers. How its car is decked! The twice-blooming roses are in its path. Every garden is a reservoir, every secret path-way a conduit of sweets. They gush into the open casement; they come upon the general air. All the waves clap their hands, and the little hills

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rejoice on every side. The other day we wandered up, up, up, where could be obtained an extensive 'eye-possession,' and encircled by the blue Kaatskills and kindred mountains, whose outlines were discerned at the distance of fifty miles, took in at a glance the whole gorgeous picture which lay between. We stood, for better observation, upon the top of a stone fence overrun with three-fingered ivy, while the pony, whose halter was tied to a branch of the oak above, pulled the leaves into his mouth, and champed the herbage with a relish. What vast estates lay between the sloping bases of those mountains! and yet on a space no larger than would be included by the circumference of a signet ring, even upon the eye itself, was transcribed a most perfect representation of all the boasted acres which made a multitude of men rich. How the properties of the earth do dwindle when you look at them from a high point! for the boundaries of a nabob appeared to us like a railed-in space for the pasturage of a few cattle, and the cloud-shadows trooped over the area of a kingdom in the twinkling of an eye. And how variegated the subdivisions of the landscape!—the meadow and the mellow soil, the woods, the waving grain, the silver stream, and distant river.

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Sometimes the 'moneth' of May is chill and cheerless, and June opens, without monition, with wilting heat. The buds open and are full-blown, and fall to pieces; the herbage loses its vivid freshness, and the admirer of nature relapses into languor while the year is at its prime. Not so with this choice season, this most unexceptionable festive season. The pet month did not disappoint its promise, dearly associated as it is with youth and beauty, with memories of the May-pole, and the tender loves of 'BARBARA ALLEN.' The apple-orchards came out in due time, and the spectacle is most charming when the trees are in full bloom. Arranged at equal distances on the sloping, undulating ground, and in the hollows, with their low and spreading crowns all covered with pink and snow-white blossoms, they appear to me like big bushes in a garden, or like the nosegays of a giant. For I like to snuff their fragrance while sauntering by the road side, or from an upper window to look down upon a long and gradual slope, on which an old orchard is freshly blooming, while the sweet leaves are wafted by the puff of every breeze, and the green germs of the fruit are forming underneath no larger than pins' heads. Also, the welcome lilac is the ornament of every court-yard, and you may

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snap off a branch without compunction, and stick it in a pitcher, if the fragrance be not too powerful for feeble nerves.

It is now the tenth of June, and up to this date we have had neither untimely frost nor memorable days of heat; but it has been, without exception, the most balmy season within my recollection. There has not been a single drawback. Copious showers have fallen on the earth; the air is choice and healthful; even in the heart of the city you have been able to find a refreshing coolness, and every where the vegetation is so rich, the crops are so far advanced, and the prospect is so promising, that we might with justice call this a *mirabilis annus*.

It is almost intoxicating to walk 'in the cool of the day' over the pleasant roads which intersect the country in all directions, and especially where they wind over the high ground in full view of the river; or to recline in an easy carriage, not your own, and to be borne along by a pair of well groomed horses, whose coats are sleek and well protected by the clean netting, and who are as gentle as doves in harness; and so, without a word spoken, with your head bare, and with a soul composed and tranquil, to travel through avenues and

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green lanes, where the giant elms lift their arms above you. Nature is so suggestive, and so many pleasant influences steal upon you, that it is most perplexing to transfer your impressions of beauty, and you feel only fitted for silent enjoyment.

If there is any pleasant feature in the country, it is a winding narrow lane carpeted with a green sod, skirted on either hand with mulberry trees, and the wild cherry, over which the brier bushes, the wild grape, and the ivy and honeysuckle are interlocked in many an impenetrable thicket; places which the cat-bird loves to frequent, and from which he pours forth his mellow and melting *cavatina*. Here is the spot where the young man, with the furze just blackening upon the lip of manhood, passing his arm about the waist of the pretty maid, whispers into her ear the most tender sentiments; for the very birds on the branches teach them how to woo and coo most lovingly. Almost every village has its Love Lane, as well as its Gallows Hill and Buttermilk Hollow.

In the course of your wanderings, you will observe that the tulip tree is now covered all over with yellow flowers, and the locusts are in full bloom, emitting from their 'high old' crowns a delicious fragrance. In the fields the clover is knee

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deep, and the cattle dispose themselves in easy attitudes, and, as they remain dreamy and almost motionless on the top of some shady knoll, in relief against the blue sky, afford a picture of grace to the eye of the CLAUDE-like painter. But the anniversary of the blooming roses is also at this time, and you must by all means shut up your workshops and hurry out to this feast. For the time is short. In a few days the brief and beautiful existence of the rose is terminated, and FLORA gives the field to CERES! The one is intended to administer to the sense of Beauty, and to be twined in a triumphant chaplet around the brows of Innocence; the other comes upon a sterner and a grander mission, to fill the granaries with bread and nerve the arm with vigour.

In the winter-time a few rose-buds cut from a green-house where they had been fostered under glass, and given to you by a generous friend, stand perhaps in a wine-glass on your table, and represent the summer. You tend them from day to day, and furnish them with clean water, until the opening bud feeds no longer on the juice of the stem, and you throw them out of your window. But they may have sufficed while on their brief errand to have soothed your soul; and, oh! to a man of guilt, if he

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has any particle of human feeling, a rose in his lonely cell would preach to him more eloquently than words, and he could wash its crest with his tears like a shower :—

'Bring flowers to the captive's lonely cell:
They have tales of the joyous woods to tell;
Of the free blue streams, and the sunny sky,
And the bright world shut from his languid eye.

But when, in the gradual advancement of the year, the time draws nigh which is monopolized by this choicest and most exquisite specimen of floral beauty ; when the wild, untutored, modest May-rose, with its multiplicity of pink leaves, has given place to the vaunted varieties whose names are at the tongue's end of every gardener ; when the uncared-for one which grows like a brier by the wayside, soon drops its scanty petals, and on comes precipitately the glorious, universal bloom of the rich and double flowers which have received culture and they crown the well-trimmed stalk, and burst out in a dissipation of beauty over the porch, the net-work trellis, and the garden bower, casting forth their very souls on all the currents of the summer air, and floating into your olfactories, climbing up and insinuating themselves into the windows where you converse, sweetly intruding themselves in every covert path, wherever you wander through the de-

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licious garden; seen at the tops of the trees, as ye are, O Kentucky roses! budding and bursting out under the eaves of the mansion, where the little downy bosom of the just-hatched chirping birds heave in their nests, and the parents drop the worm into their red mouths, unfrightened by the play of romping children; and the bumble-bee, and the honey-bee, and the humming-bird drink together out of the same cup of intermingling eglantine; then I say that you must let your soul expand with a calm enjoyment, and be convinced that GOD in HIS benevolence fashions in every phase of existence a heaven for us.

There is now a very prevalent smell of mint from the meadows, as its tender stalks are bruised by the feet of cattle, or its odours are dislodged by the somewhat rough handling of the freebooting winds. Thirsty people like to bruise it against little icebergs, in a tumbler with wine of a choice quality, and if I remember rightly, a slight paring of lemon and a straw-berry or two, to produce a curious, composite flavour, and so imbibe it slowly through a wheaten-straw, or sometimes a glass tube. What the advantage of this mode is, does not appear clearly; but perhaps the volatile aroma of the herb following in the wake of the drops which clamber

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up the tube, more gradually and pleasantly insinuates itself into the brain than when it sweeps over the sense in a powerful puff. To have it poured from a silver pitcher, on whose outer surface the atmosphere is collected in cool drops, in the heat of a sultry day, and offered in moderate quantity by the fair hands which have concocted it with skill and with a scrupulous mildness, is not unacceptable to those who make use of such fluids; and of the julep it can with truth be said that it contains some good ingredients—the fragrant mint and crystal ice-drops. That the mint has medicinal quality, is well known. With the valetudinarian cat it disputes the palm with cat-nip; and when covered with the dews, the sick chicken takes a little nip of it.

I have spoken of the feast of roses, but the feast of straw-berries must be remembered. How plentiful is the crop! In this happy land the poor taste of delicacies, and the horn of plenty is literally poured out with its profusion of fruits and flowers. Here the cows come home at night with their hoofs actually dripping with the red blood of this berry, and the odours of it float over the snowy foam of the milk-pail. It grows wild in all the woods and all the meadows, and many think the wilder the sweeter; for as it is smaller in size than the seedlings of the

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garden, it stands a better chance to become dead-ripe and lose its acid. It requires no addition, and is rendered fit to eat by the sugar of its own nature. In flavour, the straw-berry is admitted to be the acme of perfection, and it has probably not degenerated since it was originated in Eden. But it is so keen and pungent that in a little while it destroys the tone of the tongue, whereas the rasp-berry has an exceedingly delicate aroma, as much so as the wild grape blossom. Its merits are more slowly perceived, but it less fatigues the taste, and is longer appreciated. There is a pretty notion held by the Indians called the "Six Nations," that the other fruits of the earth form a part of the Great Spirit's ordinary bounty, but that the strawberry is a special gift. Hence they hold a feast in its honour, when it is offered up with especial ceremony and thanksgiving. The succession of fruits as the year advances, exhibits an adaptation most pleasing and wonderful. The straw-berry is first with us, and its precedence in time is a fair presumption in favor of its ripe merits. Then comes the rasp-berry. These occupy a certain space mostly to themselves, but when they are gone, a rabble of fruits jostle one another in the garden, and every one may take his

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pick and choice. The English ox-heart cherry charms the eye and satisfies the taste, especially when you pluck it from the branch as it hides its blushing cheek beneath the leaves. The gooseberry and tart currant arrive in the very nick of time, but the berries taper off in excellence at the close of the year. The plain and healthful blackberry is succeeded by the whortle-berry, the poorest of fruits—God forgive me! But, in the meantime, the larger kinds come in to adapt themselves to every variety of taste, and to every necessity of constitution—peach, plum, and grape.

—

June 20.—While walking to-day out of the silent woods into a sequestered glen, I encountered a very distinct and truthful echo. Every foot-fall was repeated, and if you called Hylas, Hylas was responded. There was a well-built wall of rocks in front, and happening to soliloquize aloud, it was from the hard and flinty surface of them that my own words were thrown back with an almost impudent celerity:—

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'Ye woods and——

'Woods and——

'Wilds——

Wilds——.'

'Echo!'——

Eho!——'

'Ha! ha!——

(*pathetically*) 'Ah! ah!——'

'CHARLEY!——

'CHARLEY——'

'CLARK——

'CLARK——'

Echo is a playful sprite, sitting high up, laughing, weeping, shrieking, talking, just according to the mood of those she mocks; feeding on the sugar plums and saccharine fragments of the poets thrown out to her by the romantic Della Cruscan youth. Επιβοσκετ' αοιδας. Alas! that Echo is not every where, to let us know that our words come back upon us; but her sportive didactics are given in the amphitheatre of rocks. Oh that liars would wander near her sylvan nestling-places, and slanderers travel down the lonely dell where their utterances might be heard by their own ears alone, and return upon them to knock their teeth out! Every

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thing appears to be reproduced, and each transformation to be more spiritual and refined. Is there an echo of the 'voiceless thought?' There is, but more impalpable, so that spirits only may apprehend it. The burnished glass throws back the face, and the streams reflect the weeping willows, and most delicately has the Latin poet styled sweet Echo the *image of the voice—Vocis imago.* Oh! how perfect is the representation, when she responds to the groans of the Hamadryad mourning over the fall of her own dear tree, for whose life she has implored the woodman in many a susurring sigh and whisper among its branches! 'Woodman, spare that tree!' And in the general forest she returns answers to the Dryad's cries, when every stroke of the flashing axe is heard again, and at last with a crash the oak falls with its crown of glory, and the sacred gloom of the grove is violated, and the most majestic pillar of its cathedral is overthrown. There was a stately tree upon the hill-top at Tulipton, and it was a beacon to the sailsman, as his little boat was wafted into the safe cove, but in an evil day the hand of expediency cut it down. Great indeed was the fall thereof; and as it reached the earth, and smothered the shrubs and wild flowers which had been sheltered by its shade, a universal

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wail and lamentation was heard around, and the very echoes were re-echoed from the distant hills In fact, the curses upon those Vandals have not yet ceased. There is an echo of the bee in clover, and of the precious music of the bobolink; but when the voice of flutes in concord floats on the air of eve with melodies which touch the heart; the same 'which once in TARA'S halls the soul of music shed;' the cadence and the dying fall come back with swiftest repetition, as if too sweet to die away; and as the stars glimmer and the moon sheds down her softened light, I think of friends departed and of days gone by. So have I heard the reverberations of the water-fall, and the echoings of the huntsman's horn,

'As if another chase were in the sky,'

and have listened to two farmers conversing in short interrogations over the hedge, or separated from each other by the length of a field, saying, as they placed the hollow of their hands at the corners of their mouths, on a high key:

'When are you going to mow those oats?'
ECHO. Mow those oats.
'To-morrow.'
ECHO. To-morrow.
'Want you to send that rake by the boy.'
ECHO. By the boy.

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'Tell him to bring my whip-lash.'
ECHO. Plash.
'What'll you take for that yearling heifer?
ECHO. Lingafer.
TWO POUNDS.'
ECHO. Two pounds.

Then do I wander away from this shirt-sleeved couple, whose faces are bedewed with perspiration from working in the fields and mowing the new hay, with MILTON'S beautiful apostrophe echoing on my ears from the hard and rocky surface of the times in which he lived.

'Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that livest unseen
Within thy airy shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroidered vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy NARCISSUS are?
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere!
So mayest thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heaven's harmonies.'

—

JUNE 23.—In a secluded cove or indentation of the shore, where the trees were imaged downward from the bank upon the smooth water, I observed a pair of swans, accompanied by four beautiful cygnets, lifting their snow-white plumes to catch

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the breeze, and gliding about with a queen-like motion. While I gazed at this unsullied group, which seemed to be native to the spirit-land rather than something earthly, the thumping sound produced by the paddle-wheels of a steamboat began to be heard; and as she rounded the point, the water became agitated and swelled upon the shore. At this apparent danger, the parent bird received all the four cygnets upon her back, and erecting her trembling wings into a fan-like shape, sailed away toward the green sward—a spectacle of ineffable grace and beauty. I have noticed these birds for two years, sometimes near the shore, but oftener afar-off, like specks of white, where the blue wave seemed to mingle with the horizon; but until the present season, they were unattended by the cygnets. They now form a pure and aristocratic society, intermingling their snowy necks in the most affectionate communion. At first they were placed in a small pond for safe keeping; but when the winter broke up, catching a glimpse of the broad waters of the bay, they enterprised in that direction, and could by no means be prevailed upon to return to the little pond. They left it in the possession of the ducks, the geese, the perch, the pickerel, and the mud-turtles, and went to share the

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company of the sleek and gracefuller wild-fowl who plumped into the bay. Generally, however, they prefer to keep by themselves, and show in all their buoyant air and gliding grace the influence of the pure and upper realms in which they have been bred. Oh, how superior are they to the common-people geese! Gazing at them as they sail about their own beautiful cove, whose shores are like a paradise, I am reminded of the honeyed, almost celestial poetry of the spirit-rappers :

'ANGEL with the diadem of light,
Wherefore dost thou tread this vale of sorrow?
All our life afflicts thy holy sight;
Cheerless is the life from earth we borrow.

'Straight as he spoke appeared a snow-white swan,
Floating on a dark, tumultuous river;
And as its spotless image glided on,
It trembled like a star, yet shone for ever!

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XIII.

WITHIN the past month an excitement has prevailed among the quiet inhabitants of these parts unparalleled since the great oyster - war. — Every one has heard of the inroads once made by the buccaneering fishermen of Amboy on our rich oyster-beds, when the adverse fleets had like to have come to a great

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nautical encounter. But although some guns were pointed, no triggers were pulled, and no shells were thrown of the kind used in naval warfare. That chapter in history has never been written out fairly; but let by-gones be by-gones. I am going to nab some circumstances while they are yet fresh, and the materials attainable, that hereafter they may not come up in dim memory like the records of the oyster-war. The most flagrant depredations ever known in the history of man have lately been made on the hen-roosts of Dutchess County. Twelve hundred dollars' worth of chickens stolen in one winter, and the greatest panic among all holders of the stock! The deed was done.

'Deeply and darkly at dead of night,'

and the evil was waxing worse and worse, so that out of the multitude of populous hen-roosts in the above county there was not one which had not suffered extremely. Eggs were scarce in sufficient abundance for cakes and pies: one farmer was reduced to his last little chick, while the cheerful cackle of farm yards was scarce heard. The cock-crowing which used to be answered at dead of night from hill to hill and hamlet to hamlet, until it circled the whole neighborhood, as the British drum-

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beat circles the world, was succeeded by a dead silence, and no clarion was heard in the morning except the baker's horn. Little as the farmers were acquainted with natural history, they knew that the chicken is not a bird of passage, and always comes home to roost. Their hens had not been picking and stealing, but they had been stolen and picked. Who had done the *fowl* deed? That was what the irritated owners were burning to know; for if they could catch the scoundrel as he was taking wing, they threatened that they would tar and feather him, without waiting for the slow process of the law to coop him up. He would not crow over his bargain, nor cackle over his gains. There is something inconceivably mean and sneaking in the stealing of chickens; and none but the most hardened rogue, if caught with one under his jacket, could exclaim with the abandoned TWITCHER, 'Vel, vot of it?' 'Vot of it?' A great deal of it! To take a horse or a young colt is a bold and magnanimous piece of rascality, and if the equestrian spark can be overtaken by the telegraph in the midst of his horse-back exercise, his neck may be put in requisition. That's paying a high price for a horse, as any jocky will tell you. But to go and bag a fowl

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when he is asleep with his head under his wing, is the part of a chicken-hearted fellow.

Although no clue had been obtained to these depredations, the finger of suspicion had been for some time pointed at one JOSEPH ANTONY. MR. ANTONY, a resident of the city of New York, who had the appearance of a sporting character, was in the habit of visiting this County about twice a week in a small wagon, to see his friends and indulge his social qualities. On his way out, he stopped at all the taverns to take some beverage, although in returning he was abstemious in his habits, being perhaps in haste to return to an anxious wife. But it was noticed as a remarkable coincidence that when he came and went, the chickens were always gone. Numbers of the more prying to confirm their suspicions, had sometimes peeped into his wagon, where they discovered creatures of the feathered creation. Once or twice he had his horse taken by the halter, but on promptly presenting a revolver, (we think of COLT'S patent,) he obtained liberty to pass. The knowledge of the fact that he carried arms about his person had the effect of making many diffident who had otherwise not been slow in their advances.

They did not wish to take this St. ANTONY'S fire, or risk their bodies and souls for the sake of a few

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spring-chicken, no matter how many shillings they were worth a pair. Mr. Antony therefore had the plank-road to himself. On another occasion, when he was returning, well provided as it was thought with live stock for the market, some young men got up a plan to waylay him by throwing a rope over the road. This endeavour proved abortive: for when they heard the sound of his wheels approaching; when they caught a glance of his little colt who knew the ground; and when they thought of the *little Colt* which he carried in his pocket, their courage caved in, and they fled to the neighbouring woods inhabited by owls.

Thus did villainy triumph, and the henneries continued to be impoverished by a consumption unknown to Thanksgiving or the pip. The final despair of the farmers led to a mutual compact, which we will call the *Hens-eatic League*. At a full and unanimous meeting of the chicken-owners of Dutchess County, it was resolved to keep a very strict watch over the motions of Mr. Antony on his next visit. Something must be done, and that immediately, as the boys said who sat under a tree in a thunder-storm, when one asked the other if he could pray, otherwise there would not be a cock to crow, nor a hen to lay an egg in all the neighbourhood. Ac-

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cordingly, on the afternoon of Friday (unlucky day !) Mr. ANTONY was observed to pass through the gate at which he stopped, for the tollman observed that he 'always acted very gentlemanly, and always was particular to pay his toll, and was a good-looking man, only his eyes was too big.' The following intricate plan was then hatched: Three courageous men, armed with muskets, were to keep the gate that night and receive the toll of Mr. ANTONY when he came back, and, if possible, 'prevail on him to stop.' They took their stand at sun-down. The remaining chicken-owners watched all night. Mr. RUSSEL SMITH sat up in his wagon-house; but what is very queer, Mr. ANTONY pulled his chickens off the perch almost under his nose, without his knowing it. Six expected eggs were missing at his breakfast-table next morning. But Mr. SUYD—M, who lives on the salt-meadows, arranged his plan better. To the door of his hennery he attached a string, which he conducted to his sleeping-chamber; and to the string he fastened a little bell. Then he lay down to keep awake. He heard nothing for some hours, until what *ought* to have been the cock-crowing, he was startled suddenly

'By the tintinnabulation
Of the bell, bell, bell,
Which did musically well.'

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Springing from his couch, he placed his face against the window, and the night not being very dark, the following tableaux was presented: A little wagon and a little horse, held at the head by a little boy, and in the wagon a woman with a hood. He rushed to the hen-house just in time to find the perches vacant and his man retreating, who forthwith seized the reins and drove like Jehu toward the long bridge. It is thought that a part of the distance was accomplished at the rate of a mile in three minutes. But Mr. SUYD—M was not to be so baffled. He harnessed his mare, and, taking Mr. LAURENCE with him, followed in pursuit at full speed. They overtook Mr. ANTONY at the bridge, where he was engaged in killing chickens, and throwing their heads over the balustrades into Mud Creek. Finding some one at his heels, he ceased killing chickens, applied the lash, and was again out of sight. But although out of sight he was not out of mind. On approaching the toll-gate, he began to fumble for change to pay honorably, when, to his astonishment, he found the gates shut, and before he could place his hand on his revolver, the muzzles of three muskets were within an inch of his head.

As a rat who has left his hole by night to get a

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drink of water, or to suck a few eggs, on returning finds it stopped up with a brick, and himself assailed, pauses on his hind legs and squeals, so did the astonished Antony cry out. On examining the contents of his wagon, it was found well replenished with fowls; and Mr. Antony frankly confessed that he regretted the circumstance of his capture, as he had already served out several terms at the State's-prison, and was loth to go there again, where Thanksgiving fare was so scarce.

When this remarkable capture became known on the next morning, and the prisoner and his plunder were brought to the Justice's Court, great interest was excited in the country round. They came pouring into the village by hundreds, to get a sight of the greatest chicken-stealer ever known since the creation of fowls. Nothing like it was remembered since St. George's church, in the same place, was broken open, and the justices, and the wardens, and the vestrymen, and the tavern-keeper, were convened in the bar-room of the village inn, to see a pile of Bibles and prayer-books on the sanded floor, where the head warden remarked to the repentant thief that he was sorry he had not used the Bible and prayer-book better. On the examination

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of Mr. Antony, it was apprehended that there might be some difficulty about the identification of the fowl. You can tell your horse, your ass, your cow, your pig; they are speckled, they are streaked, they have a patch on the eye, or something of the kind. But as to your chickens, though you feed them out of your own hand, the task is more difficult. You contemplate them not by units, but by broods, and single them out one by one only when the time comes to wring their necks, and you think that a roast chicken for dinner would not be amiss. On this occasion no such difficulty occurred. The roosts had become so thinned that the farmers were enabled to recognize and swear to their fowl, one to his Bantam, another to his Shanghai, a third to his Top-knot, a fourth to his Cochin-China, and a fifth to his Poland hen. Although their heads were twisted off, that mattered not so much, since feathered creatures are not recognized by their countenances like men. They are all beak, little head, and have no particular diversity of expression to be identified except by themselves.

Mr. Antony has engaged counsel to rebut the prosecution by the State, and it will depend upon the ability with which this great Hen-Roost case

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shall be managed, whether he shall be finally knocked from his perch in society, whether the plank-road dividends shall be diminished by the amount of his toll, and whether chickens, like peach-trees, shall take a new start. When we consider the expensiveness of feeding them, and the many casualties which they are exposed to from the time they are fledged—snatched into the air by hawks, fed on by cats, afflicted by the pip, and by the gapes, it is to be ardently hoped that something may be done to protect them on their roosts. Otherwise we know of many who will give up raising fowls; and then, we ask, what is to become of our markets if 'hen-sauce' is abolished; and what will housewives do if eggs are a shilling a-piece? The most delightful puddings known to the present state of cookery would have no richness without the yolks of eggs. Where would be the yellowness of 'spring' (usually denominated 'grass') butter? Would not pound-cake be erased from the catalogue of Miss LESLIE'S famous book? And what would become of the icing and incrustation of ornamental confectionery? On these questions the result of Mr. Antony's trial will have a bearing. In the mean time he throws himself entirely upon

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his counsel. When asked by the Justice of the Peace at the preliminary examination what had been his occupation and means of living, he replied ——'*Speculating!*'

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XIV.

July.

TOWARD the close of day, I was just sitting under a piazza, marking the effect of light and shade upon the mountains, and the transformations of the golden-tinted clouds, which, in the transparent atmosphere of our clime, almost rival the glories of an Italian sun-set.—The day had been warm and sultry, producing a nerveless lassitude, an inattention of duty, and neglect of dress; and

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from the mere exertion to pump up some kind of feeling, without coat, without collar, with a head dripping wet from having just plunged it to the bottom of a bucket of cold water, desiring to see no body, I was reading over the engrossing pages of LEWIS's novel, or rather melo-drama, called 'The Monk,' a production spoiled by indecency, diablerie, and blue-fire, and only fit for adult people. From the monk, as depicted in the romance, I kept turning my eye perpetually toward a *cowled* mountain (no pun is intended) which I have called *The Monk*; and from the nun AGNES to a pinnacle which, in winter-time, when it was enwrapped in a garment of chaste snows, I took a fancy to christen *The Nun*. Presently, as the shades thickened, the bad print of the book became no longer discernible; and looking up, the star of eve, with its soft and unblemished light, appeared alone in the heavens. I heard the faint hum which marks the close of day proceeding from the distant barn-yards, and the farmers driving the cattle home, and the whip-poor-wills in the meadows began their evening-song. If we have no nightingales in our climate, this bird is no bad substitute; and if we have no larks in the morning, the bobolink sings sweetly and perpetually upon the wing. As to Bull-frog, his croakings are abated;

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and as to Katy-did, his lamentations about the broken bottle have not yet begun. The night was very still; only now and then was heard by the lovers of melody the infinitely fine music produced by the tiny wings of the mosquito beating the air, and which really seemed to be a BELLINI melody, blown through the fragile trumpet of his proboscis. To those whose ears and tempers are attuned rightly, this music, pursued from high to low, or low to high, through the marvellously-ascending or descending scale of the gamut, would almost appear suited to dilettanti spirits, and as if produced by a detachment from Queen MAB's orchestra. It would be totally lost in the midst of vulgar noises; but its attenuated notes are wafted, in all their delicate subtleness, to those who recline in arm-chairs, repose on couches, and who are lulling themselves to repose. I have often and often admired them when just on the verge of sleep, and been recalled by them, from the land of shadows. How beautiful is their 'Hum-Waltz,' and their 'Teaze Polka,' and their 'Sing-sing Requiem;' enough to make you clap your hands until the blood flows! And when I have seen them after death, mashed flat in their embalment upon a white-washed wall, I think of

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that sentiment of KIRKE WHITE, if I remember rightly :

'Music past is obsolete.'

In a short time the shades of evening fast prevailed ; and the lone star, so serene in lustre, was succeeded by the whole splendid galaxy ; and I marked the course of the Milky-way ; and the big, round moon, which always seemed to me very skull-like, rose slowly, almost sluggishly, over the mountains ; and before I thought that the night was far advanced, the clock struck ten. Which do you like best, the long days or the long nights ? I am equally balanced in my own mind between the love of summer and winter ; but I think that our clime is the most happy, where there are four seasons of the year, and they roll round in just succession. I can make no choice, but enjoy them all equally, because they relieve each other, and afford a pleasing variety. There is no monotony so dreary as that of perpetual sunshine and summer ; but if I ever feel a sadness, it is when the days begin to get long in March, and the delightful early blazing fire-side has become cold. If you live according to nature and to the clime in which you are born, when the days are long, you will go to bed early, and when they are

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short, you will sit up late. But artificial habits turn the laws of nature topsy-turvy. I cannot prevail upon myself to go to sleep during these heavenly nights; and during winter the charms of social converse keep one up unnaturally late. It is hard to tell which to like best, the long days or the long nights. But I was enamoured of *this* night very much; for when the clock struck twelve, I was still sitting on the piazza looking at the stars, enjoying the hum of the mosquitoes, smoking a segar, and observing the multitude of lightning-bugs, who appeared like stars in a lower firmament, and as they flapped their wings, threatened to set the hay-cocks on fire. Last evening, I observed a young girl, dressed in white, walking on the edge of the meadows, carrying two pails of white maple filled with still whiter milk, for she had just performed her evening task of milking the cows in my neighbour's barn-yard; and as the lightning bugs flitted around her, she seemed to have on a splendid ball-room attire, spangled with stars.

While drawing the last puffs from the aforesaid cigar, thinking that it was high time to go to bed and to sleep, for the clock tolled one, (the Yankee clock in my kitchen,) and presently the factory-bell at Matteawan, three miles off, sounded the same

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hour of night through the mountain-defiles, I observed an animal half white, half black, first pressing itself under the large gate, then stealing about along the edges of the fence among my enclosures very stealthily; then hopping and skipping at the base of the hay-cocks. I could not exactly make out what it was. Its motions were exceedingly agile, and as the moon's quiet beams were shining down upon the grass, it looked as if it might be a leopard, a sly fox, a fawn, a small gray-hound, a stray lamb, a rabbit, a dear little deer—I knew not what. I retreated hastily, set the end of another segar on fire, sat down and watched the motions of this strange animal. In the first place, I could not make out how large it was, as the light was so deceptive; I could only detect that it was variegated with white and black spots. I knew not whether it was a harmless creature or a ferocious wild-cat from the neighbouring woods; but its motions were exceedingly graceful, hopping, and skipping, and playing in the moonbeams, and I conjectured that, however savage might be its real nature, it was but a cub, and that there would be no real danger in running out upon the lawn and seizing it by the neck. Thinks I to myself, 'I will do it.' But just at that moment, the black-and-white spotted animal leaped upon the

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stone fence, and with the swiftness of lightning ran for about twenty yards along it, among the poison-vines and briers which grew over it, and appearing as it did in strong relief, it seemed to be of the size of a half-grown fox; and I decided to let it alone, and to remain stationary. For half an hour I watched it with much curiosity in a state of suspense, not knowing what to make of it. Presently, crawling along on the grass to the foot of an apple-tree, it ran half way up the trunk, turned its head around, looked down, and so remained clutching the bark. 'Can this be,' thought I, 'a racoon?' I had scarcely conceived the idea, when, going at once into the house, I opened the drawer of a bureau, drew out an old pistol, put into the barrel a pinch of powder and a few shot, and returned to search for the 'coon. He was gone. In vain did I look for him along the stone fence, and round the house-corners, in the garden among the gooseberry bushes and the currants; but going under the shed, I saw something white. I pulled back the trigger, put a little powder in the pan, for I had not any patent pistol, saw something move, took aim, when suddenly my heart quite failed me. 'Dear me!' said I to myself, 'can this be a pole-cat?' The thought seemed feasible, for several times I had

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been in most dangerous propinquity to these unpleasant animals. I knew that the prevalent colours which they hung out were black and white—and, moreover, that they much abounded in these regions. It was enough. I retreated in excellent order, uncocked the pistol, and again sat down on the piazza, watching the moon as she waded through the sombre clouds, brushing off an occasional mosquito, and thinking of the just-published poems of Alexander Smith. Was Alexander a real poet? From reading many extracts of his verses I inclined to favor the opinion that he was, although he has not yet written a perfect poem. But he is a very young man, and if he does not write one, he will very much disappoint the richness of his early promise. The mere fact that his name is SMITH affords no reason why he should not be a distinguished author, for several persons with that cognomen have become renowned in the ranks of literature. The works of Sidney Smith are well known, spiced as they are with wit, although he makes no pretension to poetry, and perhaps one of the most noted poems of the language on the pleasant theme of May-Day——

But I must return to the animal.

It again appeared in sight, emerging from some

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loop-hole in the fence or the hedge, coming out from the high grass or the concealment of the stone wall upon the open lawn, and from hillock to hillock lightly leaping with the fleeting movement of a shadow. It teased me so by the distance at which it kept from the door in the performance of its fanciful gyrations, that I resolved that it would be safe to take a pistol-shot or two at it from a distance, and with the thought again seized the pistol, reprimed, took aim, when off went the little skulker into a bush. When it appeared again, my intention was changed, for it came jumping in a direct line to the place where I sat, waving its tail, which was barred with chocolate-coloured rings, rubbing its sides against the boards, putting out its front paws, and drawing them back again with fantastic playfulness; and then I saw that it was not a wild-cat or a pole-cat, but a young kitten. It slipped by me, and, faintly mewing, ran into the house, and although several times put out, returned again, as if desiring to seek a home. Since the loss of my canary, I have a sworn antipathy to cats. Though interesting at the period of mewing kittenhood, when fully grown they are skulking and unaffectionate—domesticated, yet not domestic; in old age morose, vagabond, and cruel. The other day I met

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my friend LEMON in the city, and the first question which he asked me was about the canary which he had given me. When he learned the fate thereof, he was displeased, saying that it was a gift; that there was no excuse; that I ought to have taken better care of it; and that it was one of the most promising birds in the United States.

JULY 4.—I passed the fourth of July again this year in the meekest seclusion, and except the booming of the distant guns, when the glorious day was ushered in, heard no sound but the whispering breeze among the tree-branches, and suffered no inconvenience from the smell of gunpowder. I detest the use of Chinese crackers, and for one, would neither instruct nor indulge children in celebrating the anniversary by an unmeaning racket. The unceasing waste of ammunition from sun-rise to sunset is simply annoying to all people who have come to years of discretion, and is unworthy of young American citizens. To say nothing of blown-off thumbs and fingers, and of eradicated eye-balls, if the Republic should endure for a few hundred years —and who can doubt that it will?—'*esto perpetua*' —more waste of life will ensue from fourth-of-July celebrations than was incurred in the whole course

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of the Revolution. However rash it may be to run counter to popular custom or prejudice, the indis criminate firing of guns, crackers, pistols, muskets, and arquebuses, in all streets, places, lanes and alleys, in the ears of pedestrians, and before the houses of sick people, is opposed to common sense, good feeling, and good breeding. It is also in direct violation of municipal laws and regulations, which are duly posted up in all towns and cities, and which ought to be enforced, if officers have a sense of their own dignity. Do they affix the laws to the pillars, that the populace may sneer at those who made them, and laugh in their sleeve at those who never intend to enforce them? Gunpowder will lose all respect if it is in the hands of every body. It ought to be confined strictly in magazines, and let out by safety-valves through the muskets of true sportsmen, or of authorized artillery-men, only as need may require, and according to strict license. This is using gunpowder as not abusing it. Far be it from me to desire any cold and heartless recognition of this inspiriting anniver sary; to have it ushered in or to let it go out in such a way as would suit the ideas of a few formal philosophers; to devote it only to prayers and preaching, to the sleepiness of an England Sunday

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or to the eating of a New England thanksgiving. Let it be announced regularly with the discharge of cannon, with the pomp of war, and with the movement of the 'peoples;' let the folds of the star-spangled banner be every where let loose over the masses who are collected to celebrate it; and while all men are freed from labour, let the young and the old rejoice together until the set of sun, in a universal holiday.

—

July 10.

My old Shanghai rooster is dead. From the time he was brought to my house in a basket, about a year ago, until now, his career has been varied, but the latter part of it miserable indeed. He has not ventured upon a hearty crow for the last six months. All things went smoothly with him at first, and there was a degree of *eclat* attaching to his family. The neighbours came to see him, and remarked that he was an uncommonly large fowl; but he was perhaps magnified in their eyes because he was a *foreigner;* and they turned upon their heel with a sovereign contempt of the common barn-yard fowl. He had the enclosures all to himself, and, standing erect on the hillock, out crowed the neighbouring roosters.

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When the hen began to lay, every body wished to get eggs of me. My friends asked it as a particular favour that I would grant them a few, when I had them to spare; and the butcher and baker stopped at the gate to inquire if I would not *sell* them a few Shanghai eggs. Thus the stock rose in the market, and feathers were buoyant. When the Cochin-China cock arrived, he was at least one-third larger, and so much superior to the other in all points, and had such a lordly strut and royal comb, as completely to cast him in the shade. They at once fought valiantly for the mastery, and the contest was continued in various skirmishes and pitched battles for several days. At last, when Shanghai became convinced that he was no match, his eyes wavered and refused to meet the adversary, and on every occasion he pusillanimously fled. He could not be secure even of a bit of bread; he was bullied at every turn; and he lost the haughty bearing which he once had when he was cock of the walk. What appeared to mortify him more, was, that the hen deserted him, and preferred the Cochin guest, so that he strayed solitary on the corners of the field, and picked up what living he could. He also roosted alone. Every now and then, when he

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was minding his own business, and no attack was suspected, I noticed that his adversary would rush on him from a distance, and give him a sound drubbing. On these occasions, he would run under the steps or the bushes: and at last he got to be so timid that he would fly away and poke his head in a corner at the least alarm. As he sneaked about under the fences, or stood upon one leg with his head crouched between his thighs, and his eyes half closed, and his tail, already sparse enough, soaked in the rain, he presented a melancholy ensample of the loss of self-respect. To get him out of his painful position, I offered to give him away, in hopes that when he had the field to himself, his spirits would revive, and that he would act worthily of his race. But the proper occasion not having arrived to carry him off, he remained in disgrace, and walked moodily apart, not venturing to salute the rising sun. Alas! that the chicken-stealer had not been successful in his attempt, or that he had not been metamorphosed, before it was too late, into a delectable fricassee! For a month past, I have noticed that he has waxed uncommonly lean, and I have taken care that he should not be bullied out of his corn and Indian meal. He fed readily out of my hand, and appeared to relish the attention well. But his lean-

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ness increased, and I began to perceive that he was losing his feathers faster than his flesh. I at first thought that the poor bird was shedding them; that he was moulting, and, in consequence, in feeble health, until I caught the Cochin-China cock in the cruel trick of picking out a feather, from time to time. His plumage was thus decimated, and at last his tail totally gone, and he began to look as if he had been in the hands of the cook, and was nearly dressed. *Dressed!* according to the vocabulary of the kitchen. Perceiving that removal was his only chance, I sat down and indited the following note to a friend:

"I offered you my Shanghai cock. When you come this way again, bring a basket in your car riage, and a bit of canvas, I don't want him, as the other cock is fast killing him, and he is of no use. He is losing all his feathers. Yours, &c."

I had scarcely penned the above, when a circumstance occurred, which, for aught I know, was fatal to my Shanghai. I had noticed that, at the height of supremacy, he was a truculent old fellow, and ate up his own offspring; and that ENG, the hen, although good at sitting, so that she would sit, and sit, and would *for ever sit*, was not a good mo-

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ther in rearing her brood, whereas the Cochin China hen is an unmatched mother. There is a nest of wrens in the apple-tree at the kitchen door; and when the young were hatched, I noticed them from time to time with their heads poking out, until the straw-house became too small for them. They were ready to be fledged, and fell out into the deep grass. At this moment, Shanghai, being alone, snapped them up and killed them all. I saw one of them dangling from his beak stone-dead, while he strutted about, appearing to have regained his lost estate. At this moment, in a fit of indignation I pursued him, and snatching him from the lilac-bush, at the roots of which he had poked his head, dragged him forcibly out, and threw him into the air. He came down on his legs, and ran under the shed. This last insult was too much for him. In the morning he was found upon the coal-heap, dead. Well, he is gone! he is gone! and I am sorry for it, because he was a gift, and all gifts from kind-hearted people ought to be duly prized. But I am happy to inform the donor that I have a brood of fourteen Cochin-China chickens, now out of harm's way, and one-third grown. PALMER, my neighbour, the other day said to me: 'Those are superior chickens of yours; I assure you that I *do* like them

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wery much indeed.' In a retired country-place, where there is a lack of incident, and excitement is rare, there is an eminent source of pleasure in the rearing of fowls. You are gratified with the antics of your dog, but nine puppies out of ten are of no value. You respect your horse, and have him comfortably stabled, but for the most part he is only a patient drudge. You may even look down into your pig-pen with a degree of satisfaction.

But the hen and chickens, by their nature, habits, and instincts, are an unfailing source of instruction and delight. There is something beautiful in their domesticity and close attachment to home, always feeding about your doors, crowding about you as you go forth, running and flying toward you to receive the scattered grains. The sounds which they make belong to the most cheering associations of the homestead: the motherly clucking, that frequent reiterated *cutarcut!* and the healthy, whole-souled crowing of the chanticleer. At night, when the stillness becomes insupportable to the waker, *he* celebrates the watches, and re-assures you with his voice. Starting at those unaccountable noises which are heard at night, there is a familiarity in the cock-crowing which puts you in a fearless mood, and seems to say: 'All's well.' The fresh

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egg daily brought in and deposited in a basket, the incubation, the hatching, the matronly conduct of the hen, walking with careful steps among the brood, now exchanging her tenderness for ferocity at the approach of a mousing cat, or the shadow of a swooping hawk, or, when the storm lowers, gathering her chickens under her wings; the gradual relinquishing of her charge, as they increase to the plumpness of a full-grown quail or a young partridge, when the young roosters, in the spirit of imitation, venture upon their first ragged crow, (mixed bass and treble, like the changing voice of a hobbledehoy;) the occasional cock-fight and sham battle; the feelings which you experience when you drag down a brace of young pullets for your dinner, and perhaps see their heads cut off at the wood-pile, while they flop and flounce about on their sides among the chips—these things arrest your attention from day to day, and mitigate seclusion. Although it is amusing to see ducks waddling down to the pond at sun-rise in Indian file, and at the cry of their owner returning to be locked up at night-fall in the same order, gluttonizing on little fish till the fins and tails stick out of their mouths, they have not half the interest of hens and chickens. As inhabitants of *terra firma*, they are not worth notice;

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in the water they are inanimate, and have neither the agility of fishes nor the grace of wild fowl. It is a beautiful sight to see a large brood of half-grown, full-blooded chickens, sitting down as close together as they can be on the grass, occupying a space no larger than could be covered by the broad brim of a Panama hat, or could be commanded by the sweeping charge of a double-barrel. At night they huddle together in the same manner in an angle of the shed; but when a little older, seek the perch, there to remain until the break of day, unless pulled down by the abandoned chicken-stealer.

A cock is the proudest and most majestic bird which was ever feathered. Let the gay flamingo flap his wings, and the peacock flirt his gaudy fan, and all the songless flock which make the tropic groves so brilliant. The Bird of Paradise may be esteemed a marvel, and a paragon of the most ecstatic beauty, with all its train of soft and melting heavenly colours, the blending of that holy HAND which, whether shown on the aerial bow or in the sun-set skies, or on the cheeks of fruits, or in the bloom of flowers, is far beyond all imitative pencil; one of those forms of love divine which never yet have ceased to grace our natural Eden. Even as a dove just parted from the leash, the carrier of some

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hopeful message, it seems to have been flung down already fashioned from the very groves which hang over the flashing waves that roll hard by the Golden City. But for these birds of gorgeous plumage it may be said that they live too near the sun. They are where the tendency of all dust is to take on also the more disgusting forms of life; where the lizard lurks among the choicest perfume, and where the basilisk lies along the branch. They are symbols of a perfection of beauty which is not of earth. Now the cock is the representative of the erect, inherent dignity of nature. His race is found every where. He loses not caste among the tropic-birds. He walks along the equatorial belt; he has his coop in *Terra del Fuego* as well as in the icy north. He flies wild through the primitive forests, over the great moors and prairies of the western continent. He peoples all the islands of the sea, from New-Holland to Pitcairn's Island, occupied by the descendants of the mutineers of the 'Bounty;' he is in Europe and Asia, and Africa, and perhaps in the suburbs of Jerusalem at this very day may be found the lineage of the cock which crowed the third time before 'PETER went out and wept bitterly.'

I will mention another superior advantage which

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is possessed by these home-bred birds. Things which are exceeding bright soon weary, and pall upon the sense of sight; and when the eye becomes dissipated among gorgeous objects, it soon rests upon vacancy, having reached the limit of enjoyment in the present sphere. The fiery plumes leave no impression on the seared brains of those who live in the tropics, any more than they do a track in the cloven air. The nature of these birds must be explored by the far-searching naturalist, who with an enthusiasm of his pure studies which blends itself into the very religion of his heart, like WILSON, and BARTRAM, and AUDUBON, is willing to pursue them through every danger, and wing them in their timorous retreats. Through the labours of such men we learn at second hand the endless variety of the creation, and from the wonderful adaptation of all things to their end, enrich the argument for the existence of a glorious and merciful GOD. But in the hen and chickens we have every where before us a perpetual lesson of affection, high instinct, and domestic virtues, of which the mind never tires. Pride and native dignity attend the foot-steps of the male, and in his mate we see the inherent strength of true love, assuming the fierceness of a vulture when it stands in need of better protection than the shadow

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of its wings. The pugnacious disposition of the cock shows that the government of the flock is patriarchal, and that there cannot rightfully be but one lord within the same enclosures. There can be no mixed government to be consistent with the dignity of the bird. Hence, my Shanghai, after a fair contest, was compelled to knock under, and finally fell off the perch from sheer mortification and neglect, having lost nearly all his feathers. Had he shown more spirit, although the smaller bird, he might have kept possession of the ground which was his by legal tenure. His unhappy fate reminds me of a tilting-match which actually occurred between a cock and a peacock, which goes to show the strength of weakness when enlisted in a right cause, and what will sometimes ensue from picking your neighbours gradually to pieces: and as the narrative involves so good a moral, I shall endeavour to put it into the form of a fable, without intending to encroach upon the department of that unique and exceedingly original delineator and learned Professor, GILBERT SPHINX. Here it is:

IN an extensive barn-yard, where the harvests of a rich farmer were collected, and the scattering of corn, hay, oats, and Timothy seed, was exceedingly

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profuse, there existed the most flourishing establishment of fowls in that whole neighbourhood. In the midst of this harem of hens, ruled an extremely handsome and vain-glorious chanticleer. He would have been singled out for his gay plumes, blood-red comb, expanding chest, swelling throat, uplifted head, eminent aspect. In case of any intrusion upon his premises, the result was a bloody fight, which usually left the adversary on his back stone-dead.

Early one morning before the cock-crowing, the whole family in the barn yard were awakened by a shrill, wild, unearthly scream. Sir CHANTICLEER jumped from his perch, and as the day just began to dawn, he discovered an unusual visitor, a peacock, who had strayed from a great distance.

'What do you want here?' said CHANTY, bristling up.

'To ask about your Majesty's health,' replied the other, causing his tail to droop, and trembling all over, for he was a great coward; 'only to ask about your Majesty's health, and permission to spend a day or two in your dominion, until I am rested from the fatigues of my journey.'

'Certainly,' said COCKSPUR, appeased by his guest's submissive air. 'What is your name?'

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'They call me SPLENDID PEACOCK,' replied he.

'Very well, SPLENDID, I am glad to see you. It is not very often that one of your set does us the honour to call. It is time for breakfast. Here are oats, there is corn. Help yourself: be entirely at home.'

'I will,' said SPLENDID, recovering his assurance, and scratching up a few grains.

During the whole of the first day, nothing occurred to mar the pleasure of the visit, although PEACOCK was so embarrassed and bashful that he did not do himself justice. He lurked about in corners, with his head down and his plumage folded up, and his voice was not even heard. His timidity showed itself in all his movements. On the second day, not having worn out his welcome, and his reception being good, he walked with much more freedom; and about noon, when the sun was shining in its utmost splendour, ascending a hillock which was the very throne of CHANTICLEER, he opened all his gorgeous plumage to the light. The sensation was prodigious; a crowd gathered around him, and a chuckle of admiration went through the whole yard. From that moment Sir CHANTY was filled with deadly animosity, and could hardly refrain from picking his eyes out on the spot. He, however,

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smothered his rage for the present, but he determined to be the death of him. He therefore sought a cause of quarrel, and was content to remark, when he heard his guest praised, that he had a scrawny neck, ugly feet, and a miserable, discordant voice. On the third day, being unable any longer to hold his spite, he came slyly up to PEACOCK and plucked out one of the handsomest feathers in his tail. Of this the other took no notice, as he had still ample plumes. Every day, however, CHANTICLEER continued this process of picking till there was not another feather left in the poor bird's tail, and he was an object of ridicule to the whole harem. CHANTY, however perceived that his work was not done while his adversary had still some very handsome feathers on the top of his head; he therefore approached with the intention of plucking them out by the roots. When SPLENDID PEACOCK found that he was going lose his *top-knot* also, his cowardice gave place to an ungovernable rage, and he flew at his opponent in so unexpected a manner, and without observing any of the rules of fighting, that the latter was on his back before he knew it. PEACOCK then, encouraged by success, and growing all the time more vindictive, followed up the attack until he had driven COCKSPUR entirely out of the enclosure, who was

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so mortified and chagrined that he never came back, but left his guest in undisputed possession.

While on the subject, it may not be amiss to say something about the rearing of fowls mostly for the banefit of your ignoramus who is smitten with a sudden love of the country, and purchases a box and few acres, and dreams of his exploits in husbandry and the happiness which he has in store. From the extensive henneries and large spaces which you see enclosed with light picket-fences, and the extravagant prices which are given now-a-days for certain breeds of fowls, one would suppose that they laid golden eggs, like the goose in Æsop's fable, and would make their owners rich. Such in fact, is the futile hope which is cherished. Now there is nothing which is more certain to remunerate you than the few chickens for which there is room upon your place, and which may pick up their own living from the chaff, or be supplied from the provender which you have. The fresh eggs alone will recompense your care, and your expense will be nothing. The cock will roam abroad at will, and the hens will deposit their eggs where they please, in the loft or in the garden. But when it comes to making artificial nests, and providing the birds with

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bits of lime instead of permitting them to seek out the broken clam-shells, and having their roosts made by a carpenter, instead of letting them find their own roosts on a beam or on a tree; when you attempt to raise them by the fifties or by the thousands, in nine cases out of ten you will find yourself out of pocket. These thick populations do not thrive; and as they are domestic in their habits, they are fond of a quiet home, and do not, like the turkeys, who are wild in nature, love to go in large flocks. If you live in the country, you need never be without a pair of broiled chickens on your table if you have a friend to dine with you, but you will be woefully disappointed if you expect to grow rich out of your fowls. I am very much struck with the constant rejection by the country-farmers of all fanciful schemes, and their perseverance in the old ways of husbandry and the succession of crops. No matter how tempting may be the prospect, their attention is never distracted for a single season from the common routine, and their ultimate success proves their judgment to have been correct. You will scarcely find a farmer supporting an inordinate family of hens, or providing for them any better shelter than his barn-yard or his sheds. It is the amateur-husbandman, the philosopher, the poet, the

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man of letters, who ventures on these experiments. The person who made me a present of my Shanghai and Cochin-China fowls has a large number of them in his enclosures, the descendants of those which he has imported directly from far countries; but his object is not to make money out of them, and he dispenses them with a free will among his friends, in order that the stock may be improved.

While speaking of high-breeds, it may be well to mention that I lately met a man who was going all over the country trying to procure a pair of the original, common, barn-yard fowl, and he complained that they were difficult to be found, the race is so mixed. The foreigners may have their peculiar points, it is true. Their flesh may be more tender, but they do not stand the winters as well. If they lay eggs profusely, they do not always make good mothers. If their reputation is great, they are more likely to be taken from the perch by the abandoned chicken-stealer. This, however, is a long talk upon a subject on which I have conversed before; but I must inform you before concluding that I buried my old Shanghai at the roots of a Diana grape-vine, in hopes that the effect would be seen on the future grapes, and on the same night had a singular dream, in which was blended a remembrance of juvenile,

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romantic story, and on a larger scale the obsequies of the late lamented Cock-robin. For I imagined that I saw again the grave dug, and the pall borne, and the mourners walking, and the bell pulled, while overhead, upon a willow-branch which drooped upon the place of sepulture, I heard the voice of the same ghostly raven which tormented the life of VANDERDONK.

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JULY 20.—I am not very fond of fishing, lacking the essential patience of a true fisherman. I never remember to have caught many fish, or to have been on many excursions where a great many were taken. To sit all day on a rock, or to be continually baiting a hook for the benefit of small nibblers, to get your line out of a snarl and untie knots, is not to me an amusing occupation. Several times in the season, however, it is pleasant to go out for this ostensible purpose; and though you take nothing, you come home with a sharp appetite, and sleep the better at night. The books on angling are very pleasant reading, especially the 'Complete Angler,' and 'Salmonia,' and one called 'Spring-Tide, or The Angler and his Friends,' by JOHN YONGE AKERMAN;

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a publication whose dialogue is intended to illustrate and defend from the charge of utter vulgarity, the language of the rustic population of the southern and western parts of England. But the trout are becoming more and more scarce every year, and even the mountain-streams will soon need to be replenished with this choice fish, while it requires more skill and patience to decoy the large ones at the bottom of their cold and crystal pools. To land a good big trout, whose nose you have been tickling for a long time, as he remains almost motionless, slightly oscillating as if on a pivot, and tremulously pointing, like a magnetic needle, to some dark hole beneath the shelving rock, excites a feeling of triumph as you place him in the bottom of your basket. Perhaps, however, you will have to wait all day before you get another bite.

I like to go *a-crabbing*, an occupation which has never, according to my knowledge, been dignified by description, although these shell-fish are in much request. To pick them to pieces, and nicely to extract the meat from the several compartments, is in itself an art, and enhances the pleasure of eating and now and then, in the fall of the year, if you are fond of suppers, it is agreeable to sit down before a large plate of boiled or roasted crabs, with your

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crash-towel at your side, and draw out the white morsels from the sockets, or scoop out from its recesses the richer fat. But the soft-crab is especially desiderated by epicures; for no part is rejected, and when done nicely brown, they eat the whole, claws and all. Says the old poet:

'I HAVE no roast
But a nut-brown toast,
And a *crab* laid in the fire:
Much meat I not desire.'

I always thought that the shell-fish was referred to in these verses, but am informed by one well versed in literary things that the allusion is to the crab-apple, which was used to garnish a dish. There will be no harm, however, in making the application double. When I was a boy—since which many years have elapsed, although it seems but yesterday—I used to resort to an old mill on the salt meadows of Long-Island, where a creek put up from a neighbouring bay, to fish for crabs. All which was required was a good strong net, a piece of string, a bit of lead for a sinker, a small chunk of meat, or a few clams for bait. The crab pulls strong and steadily, and seldom lets go his hold unless you jerk him, and then, if the water is clear, you will see him slinking and sliding off, with a sidelong motion, and with great rapidity toward the bottom. When you

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are sure that he has well fastened on the bait, you draw in very slowly and gradually, conjecturing his size and fatness from the strength with which he pulls; and the excitement increases until his brown shell and formidable claws begin to appear above the surface, when you dexterously slip the net under him. and he is yours. It requires some tact then, to turn the net suddenly the wrong side out, before he becomes entangled in the meshes. When you have got him on the ground, at a sufficient distance from the wave, he will exhibit a remarkable rapidity of locomotion, travelling forward, yet backward, toward the element from which he came. Then is the time to put your foot on his back, and to look out for your fingers, for he is a spiteful customer. Nab him effectually by the hind-claws, exerting an antagonistic strength against his powerful muscles, and put him in the basket. The beauty of this sport is, that your line is already baited; and if you go at the right time of tide, you do not have to wait long, for abundance of these brown shells have come, to feast on the 'fat of the land.' Sometimes the crab nips so eagerly that you can jerk him out of the water without net, but it is hardly worth while to make the attempt if you are so provided. When your basket is half-full, keep a sharp look-out, or they

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will scramble and scrabble out of it, for they are bustling about, biting and grabbing one another, exhibiting a temper far from amiable. Having reached home with your prize, you tell the cook to put them in boiling water with a little salt in it. 'This,' says the kind-hearted Mrs. HALE, 'may appear cruel, but life cannot be taken without pain.' The only drawback to the pleasure of crabbing, is the chance of taking now and then a wriggling eel, which you do not want, and which is hard to get rid of. Perhaps IZAAK WALTON, who has thrown the charm of a scholastic elegance about the art of trout-fishing, would have disdained to employ his net in this fashion. And it is true that the crab is associated with no poetic meditations, except of a good supper; neither does this kind of sport afford such leisure intervals to think upon the pleasant fields and flowers which skirt the meadows. It is devoid of science and demands no nicety of skill with which to outwit the 'scaly people,' and which makes the capture of each trout a triumph. But then there are no hooks bit off; no disappointment of empty baskets; no tantalizing sight of fish flashing in mid-air, and then falling back into the water; no tedious sitting on a rock to fill up the waste time with meditation. The tact of catching fish is a natural gift, and

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is not to be learned from books or from the experience of others. It is accompanied by an inborn love of the pursuit, and an instinctive knowledge. Bill Mallory will throw his line into a mountain trout-stream full of stumps, sticks, branches, and obstructions, in nine cases out of ten, so as to avoid them all; but if his hook gets fastened out of sight, or his snell wound round and round the slender twig, by some dexterous twitch, some easing process, some change of position, some compound tug, he will release it quickly; while his fellow-fisherman stamping the bank is deprived of hook and line and temper. He will manage, with a knowing look and quiet smile, to cast his hook into the very choicest pasturage of the brook, while I, less fortunate, toil all day, and take no fish. On this account I prefer to go *a-crabbing*.

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July 15.—Although living near the river at present, I am not exactly in sight of it, (the more's the pity,) and am not quite contented until I get upon its banks. Two years ago I was within a few yards of the wave in one of the most delicious coves of Long Island Sound. When the tide rose high by

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the joint influence of moon and wind, it sometimes came up to the court-yard gates, salted the roots of rose-bushes, set the bean poles of the garden afloat, and enabled me to cry ship ahoy! to a schooner from the window where I sat. One day the pig was drowned, and the chickens cried 'save me' to the ducks. At that time I had a boat presented to me by Lady H., called the 'Governor,' provided properly with oars and sail. Intending to take advantage of living on the water-side by becoming acquainted with naval tactics, I forthwith tried the sail, and began to scud about the harbour, until an untoward accident induced me to abandon the attempt for ever. In the middle of the stream lay anchored a Connecticut sloop called the 'Julius Cæsar,' and in attempting to pass before her, I ran into her bows. Taking hold of the boom in attempting to push off, my boat passed from beneath me and I was left dangling between wind and water for a moment, but as she returned presently, I fell plump into her like a stone with no damage but the loss of a new hat. While taking down the sail, I was so unfortunate as to unship the rudder, and while trying to recover the rudder, lost one oar, and while seeking to regain that, I lost the other. I however pushed the boat ashore with the sprit, put the sail

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in the hay-loft where it became the prey of mildew, and never caught the breeze again. One night when my boat had been drawn up high and dry, and the caulking had been taken out preparatory to her being recaulked, two fellows took a notion to steal her, and had they not been good swimmers, would probably have been drowned. For in the darkness of the night, not suspecting her condition, and having first searched for and found the oars, they launched her and pulled boldly for the middle of the stream. Before long they took to bailing, and after that to swimming, and with many oaths and imprecations they trotted home on the sands and hung their jackets up to dry. 'The Governor' was found the next day bottom upward on the opposite coasts. This whole Christian country from end to end is infested with thieves, making it almost the bounden duty of every honest man to resolve himself into a missionary to preach up honesty. My boat was also shamefully banged about by those who took her without license, leaving the bottom covered with sand and ill-smelling clams and decayed crabs. I was, on two separate occasions, challenged to row by two ladies for a slight wager, but I permitted them both to beat me, out of politeness, of which fact they may not be aware until this day, and I

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hope that they will excuse me for mentioning it. I have not, however, a natural taste for boating, though extremely fond of aquatic excursions when there is a good Palinurus at the helm, and of baiting hooks for ladies who are tender of the worms. I like amazingly to sail about in a good yacht, well manned and properly provisioned, whether to a neighbouring port or to the grounds where in cool waters beneath the sheltering rocks, repose the much-loved black fish. Has no one written piscatory eclogues ? If not, perhaps I will do it.

—

July 25.—To-day, again, I was delighted with the remarkable effects of fogs among the mountains, as they rolled down from the summits, and, breaking over the forest-tops, fell softly into the deep abyss in many a snowy cataract. Before sun-rise there was a drenching rain, and I rose and shut down the sashes in my chamber, as it was sifting in and wetting the carpet ; and, beside, the air was exceedingly cool. The frequent rains have been a marked feature in this most delightful summer. Scarcely has the earth begun to thirst, or living things to pant under the ardent sun, when the grateful clouds have collected, and presently there has been vouchsafed

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a refreshing shower. If the streams have been scanty for a week or two, so that the rocks in their beds have become bare and hot, and the water trickled among the stones, in a little while the tributary drops have coalesced, and what with fogs, and mists, and showers, have gushed down through every gully into the impoverished stream, pouring over the mill-dams in copious floods, and adding force and grandeur to the most insignificant cascade and cataract. The corn-blades shine brightly, (I speak of the Indian maize,) and there has just been gathered in the most glorious golden harvest that ever rewarded the reaper. Magnificent as the sea is, with its billows, white caps, and its breakers, its sweet waves softly laving the delicious shores, have you not sometimes been more refreshed by the sight of acres upon acres of wheat all ready for the sickle; and as the wind, the west wind, moves along the surface, at one time pouring down into the hollows and the valleys, then glancing up the acclivities; now causing the whiter and silvery stalks to bow down, and then the golden heads to stand upright, have you not looked down from a high hill upon the ripples of this waving ocean? I, for one, can never see the harvests of this glorious land, where there is bread enough for all, and to spare, without

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thinking of those lately-impoverished granaries which had no food for the starving people. It is only when the heavens are brass, and the blight comes, and the hand of labour is of no value, that we feel that God feeds us. To starve to death is hard and tantalizing, when almost within reach of the most superabundant plenty. O ye people of England! methinks you should have stripped yourselves of every grandeur, retrenched all your luxuries, cast down your precious jewelry, and brought yourselves to a mere morsel of bread, sooner than have let that thing come to pass. Yet who can doubt that such a price was thought too dear to buy the luxury of doing good? And there within the halls which overlooked those scenes of desperate sorrow might be heard the voice of revelry; the tables groaned, and still the dance was woven, and the feast went on, while from the lordly roofs the lights shone down upon the gold and silver plate, emblazoned with the arms of your illustrious ances tors, and made the wine flash brighter in the gob lets, which maketh glad the heart of man. Here are millions upon millions of acres, blooming almost spontaneously, which only wait the hand of culture. The soil is full of richness: the vegetation of a multitude of centuries has blended with its mellow loam,

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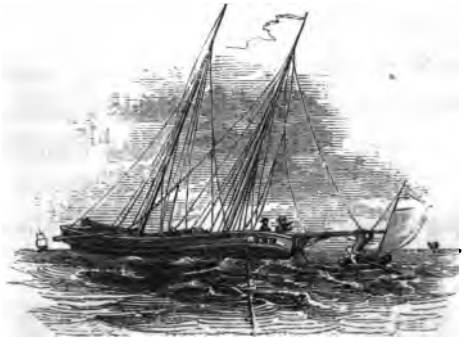
in places where the plough has never passed, and where the sower has never scattered. Tend it with a somewhat sedulous care, and from the bottom of the valleys to the high mountain-tops, it would burst out and blossom like the rose. Indeed, I see not how a universal famine could prevail among us We have a multitude of happy valleys, beside that rolled over by the fruitful Mississippi; not one majestic, melancholy Nile alone, like Egypt; and the land is too great for one angel of destruction to overlap it with a black shadow. For if a drought should fall upon the Empire State, and all its neighbouring compeers, the doors of the great western granaries would be flung wide open, the freighted cars of burden would thunder on a thousand miles toward the hungry spot, from many a bright and green oasis, to equalize the gifts of God, bearing the corn more precious far than yellow gold, and the very standard of golden value.



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XV.

August 8.

SAID something about mosquitoes, which, after all, is too serious a matter to trifle with. The frequent rains have been productive of great swarms of these detestable and annoying visitors, who are ranked in the same category with fleas and a certain nameless domestic bug. It takes a strong wind or a sharp frost to annihilate these blood-suck-

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ers on wings. When they get into the upper rooms there they stick, and the whole household must be resolved into a vigilant police to detect them in their secret hiding-places. Before retiring for the night, you take a candle and trim the wick so as to afford a clear light, shut down the windows, and commence the search. This is pleasant work, and is performed with all the alacrity which attends the satisfaction of a deep grudge. To stop their music for the night and ever more, is the object of your candle-light campaign. And first, you take a general survey of the walls to see the number and disposition of the troops, hearken with the acute ear of an Indian to detect the hum of preparation in the distance, and take notice of a few scouts who are moving about. Then you set down the candle, pull off your coat and shoes, turn up your wristbands, and take a soiled towel to apply it again to practical use, before it is tossed into the basket. Fold the towel neatly, so that it may lie flat on the palm of you hand, and go to work on the JOHNSONIAN theory, that 'killing is no murder.' Never mind the walls. Looks are a minor consideration to true comfort, a maxim which is little practised by some people now-a-days. Now, my little Maretzeks, your opera will not succeed to-night. It costs too much; there are

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too many tenors in the band. With satisfaction you look upon the first victim. He is pendent on the ceiling with his head to the antipodes, sticking or moving about with a secure foot-hold on the principle of exhaustion of the air and pressure of the external atmosphere. How marvellous the apparatus! There is at present a great man-fly who can walk upon walls, but not so glibly. The mosquitoe is directly over your bed, a fine, plump fellow, with blithe legs. Slap!—he has departed this life, *felix opportunitate mortis*. Twirl him up in your fingers, and be astonished that from a speck of dust such an ingenious, vital piece of mechanism could have been formed a proboscis wonderful as an elephant's; an apparatus for exhausting the air more perfect than man can make; a faculty for disturbing the temper and exciting to action some of the strongest passions of a philosophic man! There's another. Ah! he's gone; flown clean over to the most remote part of the room. The rascals dodge if they do but catch your eye, refusing to look you in the face; and from that time until the lights are out and all is still, they skulk. Do not fight the battle by halves; pursue the fugitives; track them to their ambuscades; shake the counterpanes and loose articles of dress; look high, look low on your hands and knees; in-

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spect the carpet. Behold the little fellow on the very angle of the mantle-piece. Slap !—that's good! he's out of harm's way, and that makes two. You don't see any more, but you hear one, and by no means think it a small matter if there is only one. He will be sure to find you out ; he is there for the express purpose of preying on flesh and blood. Fee-fo-fum. Dead or alive he will have some. Hanging above your head in some uncertain part of the firmament he will sing for the half hour, alight momentarily upon your forehead, change his mind and descend on your hand ; finding it not very plump, he will go to your ancles ; convinced that he has made a mistake, will return to head quarters and bite your temples, while you box your ears and slap your cheeks in vain. One mosquitoe is as good as a swarm, for in the morning you wake up, if you have been asleep at all, and find yourself vaccinated in a hundred places with virulent poison, covered with blotches, wishing that you had a hundred hands, and that they were all actively employed in scratching. Briareus alone would be in a state of tolerable comfort. With regard to instinct, the mosquitoe is not a whit inferior to the more sizable nuisances of creation.He prefers the cheek of a young maiden, but if she is Turkishly veiled, he can sip

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from another source under the wing of a horse-fly. As to man, the uses of this affliction are uncertain, but perhaps these petty stings are intended to prepare the way for his sublimer sorrows.

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August 9.—There is a saying, 'the winter goes out like a lion.' The same expression might be applied to summer if there is any fierceness in the sun. Some days at the latter part of the season, those which announce the advent of the locusts, and precede the arrival of the catydids, become notorious for a raging heat, like that which comes from the Desert of Sahara. Their character is duly chronicled and remembered. The silvery tides steal up in the long and glassy reservoirs. The temperature of these days is productive of a languor and dead sickness. In vain the plums are plentiful, and the grapes become ripe, and the harvest-apples blush with a red tinge; no sight is agreeable but that of the rippling waves, and no sound but that of the tinkling ice. O, ye breakers of Rockaway! you apostrophize, would that I might dash into your midst. O, ye rivers which lave the shores, might I but dip my feet in your waves! O, thou cataract

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of Niagara! that I could at this moment behold you plunge! O, ices and snows of the Alpine mountains, how agreeable your sight! O, avalanches! —ANNE! ANNE! ANNE! where are you! bring a bucket of fresh water, and throw this lukewarm fluid away! How hot is this black collar! There, there! This button pinches the throat! I am going to pull my coat off, and my waist-coat! That feels better. Now I hope that no people will come. If they do, I shall not see them. Preserve me from intrusion on a very cold day, or on a very warm. At these times you read the bills of mortality and think of your fat friends, your sickly acquaintances, the city babies who are toted about the parks. You cannot eat your dinner. With a desperate malignity you attack the faults of every body whom you know. Then you take up the newspaper and complain that it is dull, nothing stirring. A great many people are sun-struck. Stupid hod-carriers! perhaps they were never struck with anything else in their lives. Every body is out of humour, and this is plainly shown in the daily papers. One man complains that he cannot see at the Opera, at the Castle Garden, because there is a pillar in the way right in front of the stage; another, that the boiler of a steam-boat on which he travelled blew up; another,

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that the mails are irregularly carried, or that the telegraph is not worth a rush; a fourth, that as he journeyed in the omnibus a bullet was shot into it by a negro as black as soot; all calling upon the editor, by the virtue which is in him, to avenge these injuries which have become intolerable and not to be endured. As to the pistol-shot, for my own part, I am perfectly convinced that you cannot pack fourteen or sixteen people, promiscuously brought together in an omnibus, (which is the ordinary load,) among whom there is not at least one deserving to be shot. Let us hear no more on that score, since nobody was hurt, and the negro is at large. This last exploit was perfectly trivial compared with what is done in the city every day. I remember a fat virago who had beaten her husband, and entered a pathetic plea in his behalf before the Judge. He had invited a friend to smoke a pipe with him, and all which he had done was to deposit a little gunpowder in the bowl of the pipe, so that when it exploded, it carried away the end of his friend's nose.

'What of that?' she protested; 'was it worth while for a thing of that kind to bring a poor man into court for everybody to stare at?' Certainly not. But perhaps all this smacks of peevishness

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and hot weather, As SAXE says, with much facility of numbers:—

HEAVEN help us all in these terrific days;
The burning sun upon the earth is pelting
With his directest, fiercest, hottest rays,
And every thing is melting.

. .

While prudent mortals curb with strictest care
All vagrant curs, it seems the queerest puzzle
The dog-star rages rabid through the air,
Without the slightest muzzle.

But JOVE is wise and equal in his sway,
Howe'er it seems to clash with human reason;
His fiery dogs will soon have had their day,
And men shall have a season.'

—

AUGUST 10.—SMYTHE, who came here to spend the summer, expected to-day his little Mexican pony, which had been in the battle of Buena Vista. I rode down to the boat in SMYTHE's carriage with his man ALEXANDER. On approaching, the little black war-horse was descried in company of several others on the bow. He was a well-rounded animal, with a flowing mane, handsome tail, and mischievous eye. No sooner had ALEXANDER conducted him upon the sands than he began to make amends for his cramped position on the voyage, rearing up on his hind-legs, and squealing prodigiously. Among

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other feats, he stood almost upright, his head high in air, and attempted to plant his hoofs on *Alexander's crown*, which would have been the ruin of that regal piece of furniture. After that, he curvetted about, and finally succeeded in tearing the halter out of ALEXANDER's hand. Some one then assisted in passing the rope between his teeth, and fastening the noose tightly over his nose, after which he consented to be led. This being slow work, SMYTHE told ALEXANDER to get into the carriage, wind the rope round his hand, and so conduct him in the rear. We had proceeded about two miles peaceably, and the sun was down, when Mexico, perceiving some excellent herbage by the way-side, gave the halter a sudden jerk, and he was loose. To catch him appeared easy, but it turned out to be difficult. For no sooner had you approached within a few feet of him than he gave a bound and retreated down the road about a hundred yards, where he began again quietly to graze. This he repeated many times, until he had traveled back a half a mile, when he was caught. 'Now,' says SMYTHE, 'this time do you hold him tightly.' But scarcely had the carriage started than he pulled most violently, tore the skin from ALEXANDER's hand, and was off. All effort was now made to capture the mischievous little

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beast, but becoming irritated, at last, by having his will thwarted, he dashed off on the full gallop to the water-side, where he soon came plump up to his belly in a deep marsh, and we could see him in the dim twilight floundering and flopping about with prodigious violence, and entirely beyond reach. SMYTHE came back in a most vindictive passion, exhausting a vocabulary of no choice epithets, saying that he might go where he liked and get drowned; that he should not trouble his head about him, and so drove home in moody silence. 'Where's the horse?' exclaimed all the ladies on the piazza. 'Where's your horse?' exclaimed one and another, till the question became vexatious in the extreme. SMYTHE drank three cups of tea, lit a cigar, and stood in silence on the bank marking the effect of moon shine on the flashing waves, and listening to the hoarse suspiration of the porpoises who were disporting in the full tide. At ten o'clock the pony was brought home, covered with mud, in an ugly temper, and disposed to bite.

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AUGUST 11.—SMYTHE intended his Buena Vistan for a ladies' saddle-horse, but his war-horse attitudes and rough-and-ready way of grabbing the bit made

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it necessary to put him in harness. He was accordingly hitched to a carriage, the lash was smartly laid on, and his master and I proceeded at a rapid pace over some of the most romantic hill-tops of the country. Here Mexico at first justified his reputation as a most gentle creature, only a little lively from the effect of oats, and full of fun. He came very near, however, getting us into trouble. In passing over a mill-dam, where there was some little commotion of the water, he shyed in the middle of a bridge which had no balustrades, advancing so near to the brink that another step would have plunged us both into the stream. With great nimbleness we got out behind, and his master, going to his head, led him on for a few yards, (his master appearing exceedingly pale,) when he was driven home without trouble. In the evening, a riding-party was formed, and an adventurous Diana Vernon volunteered to mount Mexico. He was brought to the door properly saddled, but some person who did not know how to assist a lady on horse-back by the foot, imprudently placed a chair at his side, which Mexico at once kicked over, and began to wheel about in numerous gyrations. At last, the rider being firmly seated, pony put himself in those extravagant attitudes which are seen in battle-pictures,

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to the great alarm of some of the lookers-on. But a few vigorous lashes well applied caused him presently to fall into rank, and the whole party were observed to proceed prosperously until concealed by a bend in the road.

After advancing a mile or two, pony insisted upon being a little in advance, and, as usual, would have his own way, until from the effect of checking and whipping he broke suddenly into an irresistible gallop. The rest, alarmed, urged on the horses to keep up, if possible, while SMYTHE gallantly tried to head him off. But the sound of clattering hoofs in the rear only put him on his mettle, and made him go the faster; seeing which, the others were compelled to check up, straining their eyes after Diana, who was carried along with the speed of the wind. The utmost apprehension filled the minds of the whole party; and the cheeks, which were lately as red as the rose, became blanched like ashes. They imagined that they saw the rider just ready to fall, and riding on a fast canter sometimes with exclamations of alarm, and again in a dead silence followed for a mile farther the course of that shady lane. At last, a man, distinguishable by a white hat, was seen in advance of the Vernon, and great hopes were placed on his timely assistance, and not in vain. He per-

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ceived the predicament, planted himself firmly in the middle of the road, took off his white hat, and swaying it violently before the eyes of the approaching Mexico, caused him to sheer off up a gentle acclivity, and brought him up all standing against the fence. In a moment more, the party arrived breathless. There was an exchange of saddles, and the gallant SMYTHE, striding the wicked beast, galled his mouth well, and basted his sides, again ariving at the goal in advance.

It is said that a Mexican officer was shot from the back of the pony at Buena Vista, that famous battle-field where five thousand volunteering Yankees took possession of the field occupied by twenty thousand of that degenerate race, now ruled over by the illustrious SANTA ANNA. Perhaps in that campaign he got a taste for tumbling people from his back. His sides had been formerly branded with a hot iron, which was the only blemish on his sleek skin. From the date of the present adventure, he was abandoned by his fair patrons, driven in harness, and backed only by the rougher sex. Horsemanship is an accomplishment that, if fearless and skilful, is both delightful and safe. But rude and untamed beasts should never be ridden by ladies for the mere purpose of recreation, unless they hap

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pen to be AMAZONS, as their position on the saddle, however brave they may be, does not give them a full control. In cases of danger, the attendant cavalier can, for the most part, render no succour, although I have once or twice seen the requisite aid bestowed with an incomparable grace and efficiency. To dash up to a refractory steed, seize the bit and bridle, re-arrange the girth, pass the arm quietly about the waist of the falling maiden, and re-assure both the horse and the rider, is the part of the most accomplished knight, who by virtue of his tact, may be well deserving of his pleasant burden. But under proper auspices no spectacle is more pleasing or exhilarating, nor free from alarm, than a spirited courser, who seems proud of the charge he bears; nor can any position more serve to set off the charms of a stately woman. For mark how every rustic drops his hoe; the plough stands still; the golden grain still takes a momentary lease, when, with *quadrupedante* tramp, just like a vision, bursts upon the sight the lovely cavalcade. With buoyant grace they float upon the air, serenely gay; eyes sparkling with delight; cheeks mantling with the rose, and every feature speaking with the zest of exercise. Sir WILLIAM JONES, once looking from his case-

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ment in the East, beheld a sight like this, and has recorded his impressions:

'As swiftly sped she o'er the lawn
Her tresses wooed the gale,
And not more lightly glanced the fawn
On Sidon's palmy vale.'*

—

August 12.—Where now are all those delightful anticipations of the country, balmy breezes, spring-time excursions, plenty of fresh air and fresh milk, flowery meadows, songs of birds, excursions up the river? Fulfilled and past. The heats have been excessive; all things droop and lag; a blue mist hangs over the mountains, indicative of droaght; the mosquitoes sing all night; the day opens with a sickening heat and with the chaffering of locusts in the grove; the excessive vegetation begins to have a rank smell; elasticity departs; and the animal man feels bad. What creatures of circumstance we are! The utmost which you can do is to do nothing and to keep a serene temper. Turn the butcher from your door; live upon rice and su-

* Quoted from memory.

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gar; shut the windows to keep out the flies and hot air; cultivate the grace of patience; lounge all day and make your oblutions frequent; revise the classic authors, and try to con over some moral maxims, that the time may not be all lost. 'A merciful man is merciful to his beast.' When I see a poor horse lashed to the top of his speed and overcome with his exertions, panting, and gasping, and covered with foam, I could wish that a transmigration of souls were possible, and that his cruel taskmaster, like the vixen in the Arabian Tale, might be transformed into the ill-used beast, and lashed and goaded without stint for his cruelty. Not long ago, I met a negro going about the country with an old horse and cart picking up the dried bones of horses to be ground in a mill and converted into manure. He had arranged the skulls in a row quite regularly along the edges of his wagon, and as I approached, saluted me with a very knowing look and cunning grin, as if expecting some recognition of his artistic ingenuity. 'What is the name of your beast?' said I. 'LAZARUS,' quoth he, with a smile; and, in fact, I thought the name not inappropriate, for there are many poor horses whose raw bones and sunken eyes remind you of the sepulchre. Some reflections occurred to me more pathetic than those

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derived from the contemplation of STERNE's dead ass. Those white bones were the frame-work and timbers of once useful and docile beasts. That long skull with molars well worn, indicates a beast which has served his master well. For how many years had he drawn heavy burdens, and for a modicum of hay fulfilled his compact while he could. How many times had he been ready to fall under the ardent rays of the sun. How many lashes had he received in the course of his life. At last, when old and sick, he was denied shelter and turned out to die. He fell by the way-side, covered with sores; and at last the crickets lodged in the sockets of his eyes.

—

AUGUST 13.—To-day has been a desperate day with me. The thermometer at ninety degrees in the shade. Irritated by the mosquitoes, smarting from head to foot, sweltering with the heat and gasping for breath, at twelve *ante meridiem* I held a consultation in my own breast to know if any defén sive policy could be adopted. It is a satisfaction, however small, to wreak your vengeance on paper

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which is the most innocent exhibition of discontent. I intermitted my usual walk to the post-office to begin with, and sacrificed the perusal of the morning's paper, thereby denying myself the fresh account of rail-road slaughtery and poor labourers killed by the sun. Next, I ordered a handful of rice and a few tomatoes to be cooked for dinner, the same to be eaten at any hour when appetite should justify the attempt. I then carried a wash-tub into a vacant room, poured into it a few buckets of rain-water, and set a large piece of sponge a-floating on the same. I have a cellar, a deep cellar, a capacious cellar, which now, as always, proved a most valuable part of my house. Dug ten feet below the surface, with the light and air admitted through a few apertures, it is at once cool, dry, and salubrious—the very place for milk, butter, and cheeses, with which my neighbours keep me well supplied. Flies or mosquitoes do not find the air sufficiently genial for their natures; but rats, sly rats abound. I carried into the cellar three chairs and a cushion, and a small table, an ink-stand, pens, and a few sheets of paper, a small stick for the rats, and MACAULAY'S History of England. Then I took a sponging, and retreating to my cell, remained for three hours, alternately reading and writing, and at

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intervals coming up stairs to indulge in a fresh bath. The air of the place was most salutary; the hot breeze from above occasionally came in puffs through the slats, and once only I beheld a sly rat leering from beneath the roots of a cabbage, and with his bright eyes intent on a betty of oil. Attacked the rat, and then back to MACAULEY! Perhaps it may be a weakness to reveal these small personal matters, but hot days like the above deserve to be commemorated; and I would wish to show that for every grievance we have an ample remedy in our power. If we are too lazy or listless to apply it, then we may take it out in sighing and complaining, knitting the brows, and inflicting our ill-humour on everybody within reach. If I were about to erect a house, which, in my present state of prosperity, does not seem probable, let me tell you what I would do. I would sink a deep, capacious cellar, fill in the subterranean walls with some substance to exclude the damp, and build me rooms which should have the luxurious coolness of an underground palace. Then when the raging heats prevailed, I should not be compelled to sigh for the cool sea-shore or for the high mountain-top, but would be contented in my own house, and thus retiring to the 'deep-delved earth,' save some valu-

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able hours of study, and retrieve more from lassitude, vexation, and ill-humour.

—

August 14.—Again the heats have been unmitigated, and about noon the sultriness was so great that existence seemed a burden. There was not a cloud in the sky, and I gazed in vain to discover some symptoms of a coming shower. At two o'clock, retired to the cellar, and read Macaulay. Compared with the insufferable heat which came down into the rooms through the blistered shingles, how equable was the climate. A sufficient light stole in upon the well-printed page, and with a cooled cranium I applied myself vigorously to the great historian. He concentrates so much allusion through the philosophy of his antithetic narrative as to tax the remembrance of those not read up in the sources of history, so that in a short time he becomes painfully brilliant even in a cellar. Went up stairs presently, and found the atmosphere dreadful, and indulged in a copious ablution. All faces were ill-humoured, and the strength of animal bodies gradu ally oozed out at every pore, and I said to R——, 'Go upon the grass and tell if you observe any

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clouds on the horizon ;' just as the wife of BLUEBEARD, when the emergency was pressing, exclaimed : 'O, sister ANNIE, look out of the casement ! Do you not see any thing ?' And she replied : 'I see a cloud of dust rising in the distance.' And so might be descried a few dark specks, while the music of far-off thunder was heard at the same moment. At five o'clock, the clouds were evidently working around from the south-west, but the prospect was not favourable, and the heat of the sun continued intense. Yesterday, we had the same symptoms, but at evening the heavens were brass, and the very rays of the moon seemed to reflect a portion of the sun's heat. In another hour the heavens were darkened, and a refreshing breeze came up, and on the other side of the river the clouds were evidently discharging rain, for I could see it just like long pencilings of the rays of the Aurora Borealis, sweeping around and gradually advancing over vast tracts which, at that very instant, were experiencing relief. Occasional gusts rifled the trees of dead leaves ; the cattle lowed and galloped through the clover-fields in search of shelter ; and carriages dashed along the road in great haste for their destination. In a short time, there was a coalition of clouds from all quarters, and the moun-

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tains before us were entirely obscured from view The drops descended; the play of lightning was incessant; a tremendous hurricane came down the mountain, prostrating every fragile thing in its path; hail-stones began to play plentifully against the panes; and in an instant all the collected moisture which had been sucked up from the sea-gulfs for so many days swept along in one sheet; it rolled over the stubble-fields in actual waves, and through the gullies like rivers. Presently the earth was sated, and the invigorated lungs swelled out with fresh air like a sponge. The birds, who had been mute, began to sing on the branches; the quail uttered his sweet peculiar whistle; and the night advanced with reiterated showers. Where now were all the legions of mosquitoes ravenous for blood? Swept along by the invincible wind to parts unknown, those only excepted who have taken shelter within doors, and it will go hard with them. When a little bird, weared out with the frequent librations of his wings, seeks refuge in your house all trembling from the violence of the hurricane, you catch him, and coop him kindly in your hands, smooth down his rumpled feathers, calm his palpitating heart, and when the storm subsides fling him back into his native air. But for those marauders who have wings

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without feathers, and carry poison in their bills, you adopt a different course. You grasp at them in their flight, mash them flat on their roosts, slap them down on the walls, urge them into cob-webs and cheer on the little spider as he comes down the invisible rigging to his prey. Of all the many who ventured on your hospitality you spare not a single one. But if you have a good microscope, you will take a scientific look at the little tormentors, and not be astonished that a poultice should sometimes be necessary to alleviate their fangs.

—

Aug. 15.—In the above, you have my peevish diary or journal for a week, and more intense suffering from the heat of the sun, was perhaps never experienced in the same space, by mortal man. Whole regiments of horses gave up the ghost in the midst of their labours, and a hundred people dropped down dead, in a single day, in the neighbouring city. The form of the Pestilence hovered near, like a foul bird watching the prey; like a dog or a jackal, crouching beneath the wall; when suddenly the rains descended, and the floods came, and the electric fluids resolved themselves into red-hot balls,

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darting flames, and passed away through the firmament, burning up the noxious gases, and cleansing it of impurities; and at last, the sun, veiled of his terror, came forth to cheer and to animate: a light blue haze, like a precursor of Indian summer, overspread the mountains, and attempered its brilliancy, the breezes gushed forth, cool, as if wafted from crystal reservoirs, while every living thing which lately gasped and panted, drew a long breath, and the whole realm, by a successful revolution of the elements, was changed at once from a burning desert, to a bright and beautiful oasis.

Now, the languid arms are nerved anew, and the monotonous song of the cicada is lost in the hum of industry, and the little lambs skip in the fields, and the pig no longer wallows in the mud, but walks erect, with clean and shining bristles, in all the dignity of his porcine nature. Now the sound of the hammer is again heard, and the workman toils on the scaffold, and the labourers return cheerily when the horn blows at noon. Now you can look on the limpid rolling stream without desiring to share with the fishes, or to be amphibious, like the alligator, or the seal. It is enough to walk upon the clean margin, to pick up pebbles, to see the sails glide by, to listen to the plash of the waves, to mark the thin-

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legged snipe, as they run before you on the beach, or the sea-gulls, as they dart about, in their sharp, angular wanderings on lithe wings, as they pause motionless, then drop like a stone into the river, to bring up the little fishes in their beaks. You are not perpetually dreaming of icy draughts, or, like the tired Cæsar, crying, 'Give me some drink, Titinius.' Those who knitted the brows and scowled when the rays of the sun scourged them as with a lash, now partake of the bland weather as a matter of course, merely saying to the passer-by, with the indifferent air of those not grateful for any benefit, 'Fine day—fine day.' These valleys between the mountains are like great halls, and when you are released, as it were, from a hot oven, the ventilation is refreshing beyond expression; and although I miss your damask cheeks, oh roses, and you, sweet breathed honeysuckles, from whose lips the humming-bird dartingly drinks, as you burst into the open windows, and twine about the porch; and though all the sweeter and more delicate vegetables of the garden, such as those saccharine and much-prized peas, Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, have given place to corpulent roots, to be laid up for winter use, yet walk I with pleasure among the still verdant fields, and mar , without a murmur, the

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approach of the season which is heralded by the falling leaf.

Hast thou ever read 'The Farmer's Boy,' composed by Robert Bloomfield in a garret, without the aid of pen, ink, paper, or slate, while he in the meantime plied the awl, and pulled the waxed thread? If not, procure a copy, (I have the first American reprint,) and after you have perused it faithfully, though you may not be arrested with dazzling beauties, it will leave after it a remembrance like the fragrance from a bed of daisies or violets. Although formally divided into the four seasons, it is by no means a repetition or an imitation of Thompson, nor so minute in its particulars, but describing only the more ordinary incidents of a country life. There had been few good pastorals in English, most compositions of this kind being formed too frigidly after classic models, smelling more of the oil-can than the milk-pail; a fact which gave good scope to the satiric pen which indited mock eclogues. These writers affected the clown with not more success than the latter would ape the gentleman, and, although they treated of swains, rustic lovers, bleating lambs, hedges and stiles, and banks of violets, they lacked a true Doric innocence of expression, and the sincere spirit of the pastoral muse.

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Milton mourned, indeed, with a touching lyric, and tender pathos, the death of his 'loved Lycidas,' but for the rest, their artificial poems, however highly polished, and filled up with rustic imagery, recalled no truthful pictures of rural life. After Thompson had written his charming work, came Bloomfield, and there were scholars at the time who thought that the composition of this untutored and unheralded bard were unequalled since the days of Theocritus. It is remarkable for ease, sweetness, and simplicity, for the general purity of its style, and is a standing protest against the old motto, '*ne sutor ultra crepidam.*' There are true pictures in this little poem, which remind one of Goldsmith's village School-master. Look, for instance, at those passages which describe the character and pursuits of Giles:

'This task had Giles, in fields remote from home,
Oft as he wished the rosy morn to come,
Yet never famed was he, nor foremost found
To break the seal of sleep; his sleep was sound.
But when at day-break summoned from his bed,
Light as the lark that caroled o'er his head,
His sandy way, deep worn by hasty showers,
O'erarched with oaks that formed fantastic bowers,
Waving aloft their towering branches proud
In borrowed tinges from the eastern cloud,—
His own shrill matin joined the various notes
Of Nature's music, from a thousand throats;
The blackbird strove, with emulation sweet,
And Echo answered from her close retreat;
The sporting white-throat, on some twig s end borne,
Poured hymns to freedom and the rising morn;

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Stopt in her song, perchance the starting thrush
Shook a white shower from the blackthorn bush,
Where dew-drops thick as early blossoms hung,
And trembled as the minstrel sweetly sung.
Across his path, in either grove to hide,
The timid rabbit scouted by his side;
Or bold cock-pheasant stalked along the road,
Whose gold and purple tints alternate glowed.'

Is not that genuine, and true to nature? But Giles is a man of all work:

'His simple errand done, he homeward hies;
Another instantly his place supplies.
The clatt'ring dairy-maid, immersed in steam,
Singing and scrubbing 'midst her milk and cream,
Bawls out, '*Go fetch the cows!*' he hears no more,
For pigs, and ducks, and turkies, throng the door,
And sitting hens, for constant war prepared;
A concert strange to that which late he heard.

. . . . .

Forth comes the maid, and like the morning smiles—
The mistress, too, and followed close by Giles.
A friendly tripod forms their humble seat,
With pails bright scoured, and delicately sweet.
Where shadowing elms obstruct the morning ray,
Begins their work, begins the simple lay;
The full-charged udder yields its willing streams,
While Mary sings some lover's amorous dreams,
And crouching Giles, beneath a neighbouring tree,
Tugs o'er his pail, and chants with equal glee;
Whose hat, with tattered brim of nap so bare,
From the cow's side purloins a coat of hair,—
A mottled ensign of his harmless trade—
An unambitious, peaceable cockade.

. . . . .

Brisk goes the work beneath each busy hand,
And Giles must trudge, whoever gives command:
A Gibeonite that serves them all by turns,
He drains the pump, from him the faggot burns:

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From him the noisy hogs demand their food,
While, at his heels, runs many a chirping brood.
Or down his path in expectation stand,
With equal strains upon his strowing hand:
Thus wastes the morn, till each with pleasure sees
The bustle o'er, and pressed the new-made cheese.'

Now mark this picture of lambs at play:

Now, challenged forth, see hither one by one,
From every side assembling play-mates run!
A thousand wily antics mark their stay,
A starting crowd impatient of delay.
Like the fond dove, from fearful prison freed,
Each seems to say, 'Come, let us try our speed!'
Away they scour, impetuous, ardent, strong,
The green turf trembling as they bound along:
Adown the slope, then up the hillock climb,
Where every mole-hill is a bed of thyme;
There, panting, stop; yet scarcely can refrain,—
A bird, a leaf, will set them off again;
Or, if a gale with strength unusual blow,
Scatt'ring the wild-b'ier roses into snow,
Their little limbs increasing efforts try;
Like the torn flow r the fair assemblage fly.'

Here is one more, which will suffice:

'He comes, the pest and terror of the yard,
His full-fledged progeny's imperious guard,
The *gander*; spiteful, insolent and bold,
At the colt's footlock takes his daring hold;
There, serpent-like, escapes a dreadful blow,
And straight attacks a poor, defenceless cow;
Each booby goose the unworthy strife enjoys,
And hails his prowess with redoubled noise.
Then back he stalks, of self-importance full,
Seizes the shaggy fore-top of the bull,
Till, whirled aloft, he falls a timely check,
Enough to dislocate his worthless neck;
For lo! of old he boasts an honoured wound,—
Behold that broken wing, that trails the ground!'

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For myself, I admire Thompson much, and Bloomfield more, although it would be no enviable praise to stand next on the shelf to that most exquisite descriptive poet. The first is more exhaustive of topics, but the second has produced a work not less rounded and complete. The one is more read, but the other is not less remembered. For the one depicts like a true artist, and simply, too; the other artlessly describes, but with the same truth. They are like shepherds playing alternate flutes on a green bank, among the flocks and kine, and we listen beside the hedge to the air or melody; but in the attitude of Colin, when the tune is done, exclaim, 'What a beautiful *second!*' Bloomfield's poem does not seem to be written under a sky-light, (as it was,) in the city, but beneath the open sky itself; for it smacks of the soft, sweet, influences of nature, whence its inspiration was derived; and although its merit, like its author, is modest, it will live and be admired among loftier works, so long as the daisy is not put to shame by the damask-rose. It is one of the most difficult among literary feats to write a good pastoral. In the last century, when passable poetry was not such a drug as it is at present, and the bard, as in Homer's days, was considered sacred, it was customary

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to regard a rhyming plough-boy, or a poetic dairy maid, as a real curiosity, and to bring them out for exhibition into the drawing-rooms of people of quality, where the poor creatures were smitten with amaze ment, and struck dumb, and afterwards rendered good for nothing, when their rhyming faculty turned out to be a mere ordinary gift. There were, however, two *Robins*, whose sweet and wholesome notes have justified the praise of those who love Nature, and have confirmed their reputation as genuine birds of song—Robert Bloomfield, and a greater still, Robert Burns.

—

Aug. 15 —The willow and the poplar are always associated in my mind, because they have been the ornament of some old and well remembered spots. Neither of them have received justice, and they have been rooted from the spots which they were born to grace, to make room for the stiffer and more stately trees of the forest. The acorns drop where the willows should weep, and the elms' branches are intermingled in the narrow lanes where the long row of poplars should stand like sentinels. All trees derive a part of their beauty from the position in which they are, and the common cedar which is permitted to grow in wild patches, or by the way-side, would become illustrious if transplanted to the lawn to

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stand in contrast with a softer foliage and with other styles. There is one tree for the knoll, another for the nook, another for the avenue, another near the stately mansion, and all may be intermingled every where. Sometimes they should be planted like flowers in masses, and sometimes singly where they will be set off and relieved by their neighbours, so as to please the eye, to gratify the taste, to afford shelter, to enhance beauty, and to leave nothing to desire. But they are cut down with the civilized axe, and they are planted without judgment. If they are near a house they are often removed because they occasionally obstruct the eaves or enter the spring, or what is worse, because the timber will bring money. As ladders are not expensive, nor labour too dear, it would be better to remove the leaves yearly, or even to dig a new well than to cut down a tree because of its roots. The shade is often as desirable as cool water, and a house standing in the hot sun is most uninviting. Many people in the country never think of planting a tree, nor hesitate to cut one down for a few dollars, nor have one sentiment with respect to any thing except the pork and beans which will feed them and the laying up of money. If they had the first inkling of an idea of the happiness which might be derived from

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other sources, they would set out trees as well as corn, and aspire to other flowers than a chance holly hock.

From the time when Pope planted the first willow in England until now, no tree, whether native or foreign, has competed with it in use or beauty. Its tender foliage first sprouts in spring time and lingers to the very verge of winter. Its crown is noble and far spreading, its shade ample, and its limbs are graceful and beautiful, whether they droop upon the roof of the old homestead or into clean waters. Standing singly it is a welcome and refreshing sight, but I have not seen what would be the effect of a whole grove or forest of willows. No doubt it would be delightful in the extreme. No smell which is offensive exudes from the bark or sprouting foliage, but the cattle love to nip it, and it contains a principle which is a powerful antidote to the poisonous miasma. To the sick or the consumptive a twig of it is a grateful sight, and I would not cut down a willow except for the most stringent necessity, unless it undermined the very house I lived in. It is indeed true that its branches are brittle, and that its symmetry is often injured by the winds which snap off the tender twigs or perhaps uproot it; but it has this advantage; if the limbs have

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strayed off wildly, or its form has lost symmetry, you can saw off the tops and immediately there springs from the thick trunk, which is full of sap and tenacious of life, a green and tender vegetation. I am surprised that the willow is not more used for ornament, and that it is only tolerated as long as convenient, in the places where it has happened to spring up; for I consider no paradise complete without it, and it ought to be planted and tended and trimmed, with as much care as the best tree in the forest.

The poplar seems to have gone entirely out of date, and is rooted up now almost invariably wherever found. Once it used to be greatly valued, and pains were taken to plant it in avenues where its unique appearance was *highly* becoming. It is no longer pop'lar, but this is usually the effect of extravagant admiration. The public is fickle in its tastes, and where it has lavished too much praise, at last refuses any. The poplar, it is true, has many faults. It soon becomes paralyzed at its extremities, as tall people are apt to be sickly, and abounds in dead limbs; it has a tendency to overrun the soil, and if not restricted, may make itself a nuisance, but under proper discipline it ought to be permitted to rank among the trees. It makes a

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good landmark near the sea-shore, and although its dry branches may rattle together in the winds, the helmsman fixes his eye upon it, and it becomes the life of the crew.

The locusts, which for many years have been afflicted by the borers, are gradually recovering, and this beautiful and most valuable tree, has never lost favour.

But I would wish to say a good word for the Alanthus, which some few years ago was all the rage and now is evil spoken of, and rooted out of enclosures. It is possible to slander trees as well as men. It is said that the smell of the blossoms is deleterious and unhealthful. I say that it is no such thing, and that if it were so, they bloom seldom, and are scarcely ever a nuisance, but almost always afford a great shade and comfort. Some people of peculiar organizations have defamed them lately in the newspapers and periodicals, because their nerves have been affected by them for the few days during which they have been in bloom. There are those also who are ready to faint at the smell of the lilach, which is exceedingly sweet and powerful, but who ever thought of banishing it from the court-yard? Its flowers continue for a short space, and if they offend a few, they are very welcome to the many. Such

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is the case with the Alanthus, and I challenge proof that it has been hurtful to the health of any one. It is of rapid growth, and affords a quick interest in shade for the expense invested. This is certainly a desirable end to be attained, because every man would naturally wish to have some good of the tree which he sets out, although I like to see an old man sedulously planting acorns, who knows that even his sons may not live to behold the glory of the oak. The Alanthus, it is true, is not the best kind of tree nor the most permanent, but its shade is desirable until you can make other trees to grow. After that when it becomes old and scrawny, cut it down if you please; but in the mean time you will find it of great value.

But he who plants an elm, deserves well of posterity. It is the tree of trees. Its roots grapple the earth and make its hold secure against the approaching tempest. In grandeur of proportions, it is only equalled by symmetry of form and the cleanness of its foliage. Its stately column rises to an immense height before lowest limbs by degrees parting from the main trunk, overarch the widest highways and the highest roofs. It counts its age by centuries, and acquires strength, not feebleness, by old age, for the sap rolls in rivers from its great

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heart, and every part is vital. On the banks of the Hudson, in front of an ancient homestead, where the Order of the Cincinnati met, there is an elm which is the crowning glory of the hill-top, and deserving to be venerated by the near grove. It is a tree-model which the eye of the painter might contemplate with pleasure, and I have seen a picture of it which is a dainty and delicate piece of pencilling, which you shall see presently.

What can be more suggestive to one inclined to poetry, than the noble tree which stands in solitary grandeur. It is not as when you walk in the gothic gloom of forests, or beneath the shade of interlocked and intertwining limbs. It has a history of its own, whispered into your ear by its waving branches, and made emphatic by its nodding crown, and in the winter time by its bare and outstretched arms. When you commune with an old man, you are linked by a living tie with the generations lately passed from the stage, but in the presence of an old tree to departed centuries, and you invoke the spirit of its glory, to tell you what it knows and on what scenes its shadows may have fallen. Tell me, thou aged elm!—offspring of classic soil, and nodding toward yon roof where those old men sat in council, what legend should be engraven on thy stately

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shaft which stands as the monument of that green knoll which overlooks the river? When thou wert young, the Indian paddled his canoe through yonder waves where now the princely steamboat ploughs her way as graceful as a swan, or drew his barge among the trees, the "high trees," which the red man venerated, "on which the eagles built their nests." What plumed and painted chieftain hither led his swarthy love, and what his name and hers? Grey Eagle and Morning Glory? Big Thunder, and Curling Smoke, or Cataract and Leaping Fawn or Prairie Flower? What said the King of Matteawan? And tell me, old tree, in what battle of the elements hast thou won those honourable scars and at what time the skies grew lurid with the bolt which pierced thy heart, thou vanguard of the forest, and champion against the storm! Thou hast wrestled with the hurricane, and the lightning has thrust its red fingers through thy locks, and all the winds have many a time come down the mountains to fight thee, and snows have weighed thee down, yet thou art glorious in old age, and can respond as musically as ever to the summer winds, and the weary wanderer courts the shelter of thy shade. Cans't thou tell me of Hendrick Hudson, old tree?

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Aug. 15.—There is an old dog belonging to my neighbor Palmer, who comes to see me once every day about the hour of dinner, with the expectation of being invited to accept of a choice mouthful. He comes with the attitude of a suppliant for alms, his head down, his tail streaming along the ground, his mouth watering, his eyes cast down, and now and then furtively lifted, and so crawling, almost creeping toward me, as if waiting for a word of positive encouragement, when he leaps forward with alacrity, or with the mere utterance of the words "go home," he turns his back and with a flea in his ear, to say noting of those on the rest of his body, goes back to the old farm-house. If the family are at dinner, he sits down on the steps and thumps with his tail. To-day he made his appearance out of the woods covered with cobwebs, and as the sun shone on them, he looked like a lion tangled in the meshes of a silver net. During the dog-days, I have no meat to give him except it be now and then a small piece of lamb, for which it seems hardly judicious to cultivate his taste. Although he is very hard on hogs, I am not aware that Boos is addicted to sheep-stealing, and I never knew a dog who was, according to his master's knowledge. No matter how many innocents have been throttled over night, the man who loves his dog would consider it a po-

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sitive injustice and slander on his character to hint at such a thing, and perhaps would even come to high words with him whose fold had been invaded. Sheep are a grand objection to keeping a dog, and *vice versa.* Above all things it is the part of a Christian man to be at peace and tranquility with his neighbour. In vain the air is choice and the daisies bloom, and the birds sing, and all things without contribute to a tranquil bosom; a little strife will turn your pleasant garden into a place for thorns and brambles, and the course of life so clear and lucid, now frets along in a turbid and interrupted current. Scratching chickens may be the destruction of a well riveted friendship, and a nudging pig who opened a garden gate, once caused a mighty faction and a revolution in the politics of a whole country. A noble dog who would take a thief by the throat, or save a child from drowning, is too apt to have a weakness for mutton, and this neutralizes all his virtues and makes him outlawed. There are no shepherds proper in this country, but it is hard for the farmer who has counted his white sheep on the hill side, when with the peeping dawn he takes down the bars and goes among the dewy grass, to find a score of them dead under the apple trees, giving their last bah! in their white woollen wind-

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ing-sheets. In vain then as he returns sorrowful to his breakfast to tell his wife of this deficit in the revenue, does he cast a scrutinizing look at Boos or Neptune, who lies innocently wagging his tail, and distilling lucid drops before his master's door, and discovers on him no mark of blood. He states his misgivings to the proprietor of the dog, who sympathises with him most sincerely in his loss, but who is sure that his suspicion is unfounded. And so the matter ends until an explanation is heard which results in the death of the Newfoundland, and mutual bickerings ensue which are only to be stopped by the arrival of a new tenant. Were it not for this contingency, I should be very happy to maintain a pup.

When I lived on the sea-shore, there was an old dog of low extraction, a member of the extensive family of Rovers. He was worthless, though not in the bad sense in which that epithet is applied to men. He was of no value, although even that is perhaps estimating him unfairly, for he was affectionate to a degree which provoked a smile, and so ugly as to win upon your esteem. He would jump up and put his clumsy paws all covered with mud upon your knees, and the more you put him away, so much the more would he leap upon you, till an-

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gry, yet laughing, you succeeded in driving him off and looked for the broom. When my breakfast was brought up stairs, he was punctual to the moment, and sat outside the door thumping the floor with his tail, or whining with piteous inflections to be let in, until dashing down the napkin in a rage, I admitted him to a solitary mouthful, which he swallowed with a gulp, and with a smart valedictory kick dismissed the leering suppliant, and used to hear him bungling down the stair-case. When we went out in the bay, this old dog could not bear to be left behind, but resolutely swam for the boat, and in spite of brandished oars would scramble in, and standing on the poop shake himself as if he had gone where the crew wished him. Sometimes he would follow so far, that he was dragged in out of pity; at other times when we were too far off, he would stand on the bank filling the air with lamentations, and imploring us to come back and take him in. If his request were not complied with, he would take a short cut, two miles, to head the boat, and when we reached the narrow inlet, there he stood, when some one of the party would usually insist that he should be permitted to embark. Patting on the head, or the common-place approval of "good dog! —good dog!" used to fill him with the liveliest sen-

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timents of satisfaction. But I cannot say after all that he was of no value. One evening the person to whom he belonged, sent a little boy in his company to the village to buy a bottle of brandy for external application. On his return, a coloured gentleman who had a small current of Indian blood in his veins, who was distinguished for his knowledge of roots, who took his medical degree in the college of Nature, and was known by the title of Doctor January, perceived the neck of the bottle in the basket, and highly appreciating the medical qualities of the fluid, attempted to possess himself of the same, without regard to the outcries of the little boy. The dog who was three or four hundred yards ahead proceeding homeward on a jog trot, forthwith returned and bit the leg of the doctor so shockingly, that he was laid on his back for a month.

Lady R. possessed an Italian greyhound, the weest of all wee things. He was what we would imagine a dog to be after swimming across the Stygian pool into the spirit-land of the canine species, if dogs have souls, and they say that pet dogs have. He was *spirituel* in the extreme, his height almost the same as that of a young puppy, his legs no thicker than a pipe-stem, his nose sharpened to the point of a cambric needle, and oh ! his amblings, his an-

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tics, his actions—they were like those of the shadow of a Lilliputian deer. His name—but I forget—*her* name was Jenny Lind. Every morning after breakfast, when the fowls came to the hard-rolled, pebbled walk before the door for crumbs of bread, she would approach and retreat, crouch down and curvet about in a circle, and make her laughable attacks, till frightened back by the flapping wings and fierce onset of a stout and motherly duck. One night the little dog, in consequence of a too luxurious diet, fell into convulsions, and surrounded by a tearful household, expired in her master's arms before the break of day. Poor Jenny Lind! I was acquainted with a man who owned a Scotch terrier of exceeding intelligence. His master went to the city every morning and returned at night. As soon as the car-bell rang and announced the return of the train, he started for the depot in a slow and orderly trot, where he took his place on the platform, and as the cars severally passed by, he poked his nose into one and another, glancing over the passengers, until he perceived his master, whom he welcomed with an extravagant joy. This little dog understood the use of language, although he had never been trained to letters in an artificial way as they bring up a learned pig or a learned goat. His

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master shrewdly suspected that he knew every thing which was said, and he was confirmed in his opinion in this manner. One day in winter, the fire going out, he said to him jocosely, "Ponto, take that basket and go into the yard and pick up a few chips." Ponto took the basket, went to the wood-pile, took up the chips in his mouth, and brought them in. Ponto was death on rats, and would despatch a score of them in an incredibly short time, but he nearly lost his life in an unlucky, useless, and inglorious tussle with a pole-cat. Not suspecting its peculiar means of defence, he flew at it, and received in his face and eyes the full out-squirt of its pungent and pestilential indignation. I neve saw an animal in such agony in my life. He groaned, he squealed, he choked, he squirmed, he twisted, he rolled on the grass, he bit the dust, he rubbed his eyes, and at last plunged headlong into a pond where he liked to have been drowned. This was his first lesson in Natural History.

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XVI.

TO RICHARD HAYWARDE.

Up the River, September.

IN the banks of the noble Hudson, before it becomes abbreviated in width, high up, upon a grassy slope, thou, Haywarde, enamoured of the country, not about to erect a modest mansion, not castellated, although in one sense a castle; the stronghold of hospitality and domestic virtues, and according to that rural taste which distinguishes the Hay-

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wardes to be entitled Chestnut Cottage. Beneath the spreading branches of that ancient and vigorous tree which gives a name to your place, I imagine the pleasure which is in store autumnally for the youthful Richard and his co-mates, as soon as the burrs have become large, and they have entered in earnest on the collection of that fascinating nut. To go a-chestnutting is associated in my own mind with more pleasing juvenile reminiscences than to go a-fishing. When the days began to grow cool in autumn, and the first frost had whitened the earth, and cracked open the prickly enclosures, and ripened the nutty crops, we used to go forth with little baskets, and having arrived at some "sweet hollow" or amphitheatre in the woods, we stood upon the green sward looking up at the rounded crowns of the chestnut-trees and at the nuts ready to burst with plumpness out of their fortifications, some white as milk, others mottled, others of a chocolate colour, and the rest like burnished mahogany, with a little downy tuft at the point of the shell. To hunt among the leaves for the fallen nuts, and to throw them one by one with a rattling sound into the baskets, counting their number as with a cry of delight they were found, was the first labour. When this harvest was pretty well gleaned, the more active and adven-

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turous boy, throwing his coat away, taking off his shoes and hat, and hugging and clasping the mighty trunk, would begin gradually to ascend, assisted in the rear by juvenile arms, and finally standing as if the platform were secure upon a multitude of little palms overlapped, and taking breath before making a resolute effort to reach the branching limbs where the grey squirrel's nest was situate. And "don't you remember" how others would take out their jacknives (those four-bladed jacknives, last year's Christmas presents from Grandpa or Aunty,) and hack down the long, lithe saplings, with which to thrash the superincumbent limbs, and what a rattling, nutty shower would ensue? But it required a coy and dexterous handling to get the meat from the well-protected and nutty porcupines. The little girls wore gloves and the boys fingered the burrs tightly with sharp spikes, and mashed them between two stones, leaving at last an immense pile on the ground and bearing away with joy the well-filled baskets—recompense of a day's hard work.

Is not a fruit basket filled with boiled chestnuts, which have been flavoured with a little salt, a very pleasant addition to the dessert? But if a large stock has been laid in, put them in bags and hang

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them up to be smoked and cured in the chimney corner, and in the middle of winter, you will find the nuts, if properly dried and not too hard, exceedingly sweet and toothsome? *Your* children will not be obliged to roam into the woods to which excursion a part of the pleasure of chestnutting is due, but will experience some of the sport in days to come at Chestnut Cottage.

Richard, on some accounts, I really regret that you intend to camp among the fields. I shall presently have no friends in town. On a winter evening when the ground was covered with snows, and the cold was bitter, I would sometimes wander up Broadway a long distance, then turn to the right, pass the Italian Opera House with its row of gas lights in front, and when before a house whose threshold is approachable by a single step, and just opposite the dial of St. Mark's Church, pull a bell heartily, and ask if Mr. Haywarde were at home;—a question which in nine cases out of ten was answered in the affirmative by the cheerful maidservant, except that now and then she would say that Mr. Haywarde had gone to the club. When such was the case, I would sorrowfully depart, being a member of no club, but one of an Eclectic Society composed of men in every honest and honourable

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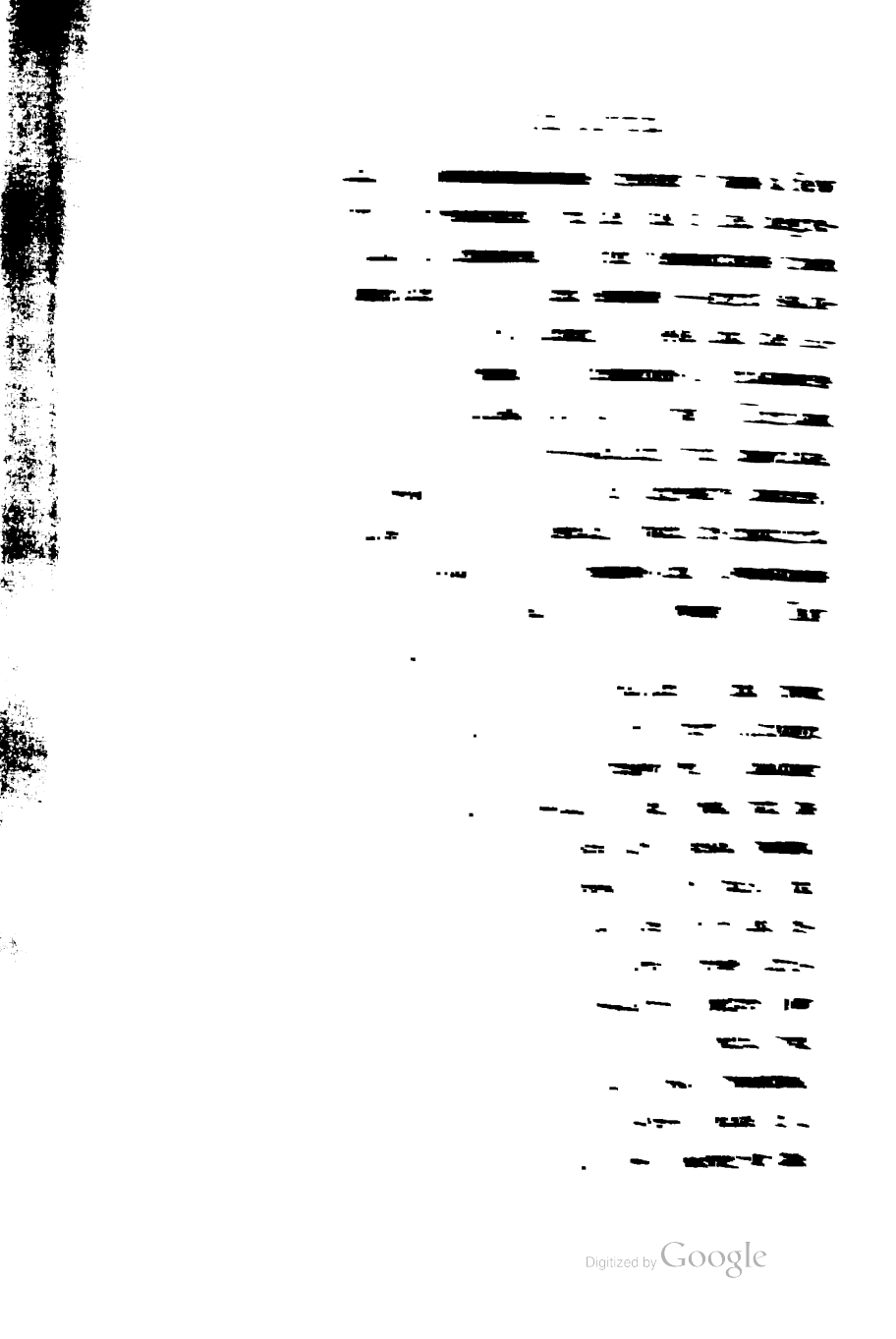

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blank page, in ink somewhat pale, the well-known chirography and undoubted signature of Laurence Sterne. There were scores of clearly printed folios full of those pithy and quaint sayings for which you may look in any book having the year 16— on its title-page, besides many nick nacks of literature which I may no doubt see again at Chestnut Cottage. But there was something in the length and breadth of that little study which exactly pleased the eye by its harmonious proportions, and with the comfortable arm-chair placed in one corner, when the gas shed down a cheerful blaze, it was a welcome spot for a literary man to pass an hour in, and it seems a pity that it should be desecrated, or that any of its fixtures should be removed. But a change of residence is nothing uncommon in our part of the world. The benefits which we derive from our civil institutions sometimes, it must be confessed, make a fearful inroad on things merely sentimental. An hereditary possession, whether of blooming acres, house and fixtures, silver goblets, or what not, which remain unmoved and irremovable, has somehow a refining influence on its owner, and brings a fine aroma to the feelings inappreciable by the vulgar sense. All places and things become religiously consecrated by the occupation and use, and are soon

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associated with the dearest memories. But this deeply planted sentiment of our natures, we are compelled to violate. We make a stand on hallowed churches, but our homes are temporary, and our household gods are destined to be removed. Oh, that it might be otherwise, if it could be for the common weal, and that we might join in that aspiration of Pope's fresh and early muse :—

'Happy the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air,
On his own ground.'

One of the most melancholy sights which I ever beheld was what was called a GREAT VENDUE. It was the selling out of all the goods and chattels which attached to an old homestead. A few months before, the gray-haired sire walked stout fresh and vigourous in his eightieth year, full of pleasantry, with all the graces of the old school, delighted as much as ever with crops and farming and sleek cattle. Then came a funeral procession from the hall of the mansion, winding about among the oaks, and with many tears, and with much respect, this old occupant of the soil was softly let down into the sepulchre of his fathers.

'Linquenda tellus et domus et placens
Uxor neque harum quas colis arborum
Te praeter invisas cupressos
Ulla brevem dominum sequetur.

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I can never tire of repeating this sentiment of the poet Horace, an author which this old man had at his fingers' ends, and while he lay on the hard sofa in the hall, reading the odes on a summer's day, quoting those sentiments which apply to common life, expressed by a few compact words in majestic Latin, he would say with a smile in allusion to his latter end, that he was "only waiting for the carriage." Horace and Livy he used to read through and through every year, and the Bucolics of Virgil, and he would laughingly say that the perusal was an ever fresh delight, because the decay of his memory was so great that it was every time like a new story. But the Bible was his Book of Books, of which, although he forgot nothing, he always found some new direction given to thought in the expansion of its immutable and glorious principles.

But he died and was buried by his kindred, and the place must needs be sold and pass into the possession of strangers who would demolish the house and set no value on a single tree, except for the sake of its shadow. The law of change, however, arrested for a little by arbitrary enactment, must alas! prevail in the end, and with a sigh we acknowledge that it is well that it should be so. One day I passed by, (it was a sunshiny morning,) and observed an

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unusual bustle. All kinds of carriages were on the ground, and the horses who were tied to the posts and trees at every available spot where there was any shade, were stamping with their hoofs round holes in the grass, and there was a great crowd assembled about the porch, and wandering with free license through the chambers of the house, among the grounds and through the garden, picking fruits, making themselves at home, and satisfying their curiosity by a sight of mere ordinary things which had heretofore been hidden from view. In the midst of the confusion could be heard the hammer of the auctioneer, and the gay hilarious laugh in answer to his appeal to their risibilities, because the auctioneer usually professes to be a wit. There he stood in the most unfeeling manner, knocking down to the highest bidder old pieces of furniture now out of fashion, tables with lion-like claws, just like so much lumber. There was a samp-mortar, used by the Indians who pre-occupied the spot before windmills and water-wheels were heard of on this continent. There was the substantial mahogany cradle in which so many members of the family had been rocked, as good as ever. I once saw a man bowed down with age, look down upon the roofed nestling place, where as it seemed but yesterday

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his infantine face was pillowed, and he marked where the rocker had been worn away by the touching foot of one whose tenderness was not yet forgotten. There was the solid, sound, round, substantial mahogany, which had so often groaned with dainties, around which so many delightful family gatherings had been held on many a Christmas holiday. "How muchumoffer'd, how muchumoffer'd ?—going, going, going—an half do I hear ?—anaf—naf—naf—naf—naf—naf—naf—naf—naf—nafnaf—nafnaf—nafnaf speak quick and be done—bang.—Cash takes it.—And here, gentlemen, is a globe of the United States." Ah, how discordant the choral laugh, and the continual tramping of the multitude, so different from the pattering footsteps which used to be heard on the stair cases and in the hall. By night-fall the work was done, the accounts were cast up, the house was dismantled of its furniture, and the company went home.

And much more varied and melancholy, Haywarde, are the adventures and destiny of choice books. The treasures of the Vatican and Bodleian libraries remain, and will remain, it may be for ages on the foundation which was intended to be eternal, until the fires of Vandalism or Revolution sweep them away like those of the Alexandrian. But what be-

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comes of the private collections, small libraries like yours, compacted with so much pains, and guarded with so much affection? In a few years the books are scattered abroad, and one of them is picked up at a night auction-sale under the gas lamps, and others which whilome used to stand in most respectable company among the Beaumonts and Fletchers in some rosewood case, are wistfully gazed at on a street-corner by the sauntering scrutinizing collector, or antiquary, mixed up with Dilworth's spelling books, elegant extracts of prose and poetry, and the stray odd volumes torn away from costly sets, and the emptying of trunks in the garret. Long may it be before the books in the Hayward collection be thus scattered, but although removed from their snug delightful depository in the city, may they find an equally pleasant, but longer and securer resting place in Chestnut Cottage, there to be taken down and delicately handled by the friends who are seated in social converse, to be perused with dulcet gusto, on the piazza of that rising house which is to overlook the river.

The River!—It is a great privilege, every year more dearly purchased, to have a house not exactly out of the world, upon some stream of flowing water. From experience I speak, having for three

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years lived within a stone's throw of the spot where the tide rolled up on snow-white sands and pebbles, and almost on any sultry night could I walk into the phosphorescent wave and return all dripping to a couch visited by sleep sweet and sound and refreshing until the birds began to sing at early day, and there too, from time to time, enjoyed the charming prospects from the Piazzas of Rhineland, Eglantina, Bella Vista, Ward's Promontory, Thurstonia, Kalmia abounding with laurels, and Hawthornden. And oh, the rides about that rolling landscape, winding about promontories whose base was laved by the clear blue waters of the Long Island Sound, those beautiful coves sweeping around in a circle like the Bay of Naples !—and the excursions into the broad deep through that narrow inlet !—the black-fishing on the rocks, the feasting and jocosity on the mainshore, or the embowered islets !

Some would prefer a house upon the broad ocean, but there are few available places to be had along the coast where in addition to a sight of the "Far Sounding," you have the advantage of high banks, green fields, and of a pleasant landscape. There is indeed nothing more hilarious and inspiriting than the sea itself, emblem of the Infinite ; to feel in hot summer gushing over your brow the ever pure and

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fresh breeze which comes up from its bosom, saying with the Greek poet, αυρα, τοντιας αυρα, and with Plinius in his delight, *O, mare et tellus! verum atque secretum,* μουσειον—*quam multa invenitis!—quam multa dictatis;*—to walk bare-footed on the white beach, on the very edge of the retreating wave, and feel the sands sucked away beneath your toes, yea, to dash with a frantic joy into the midst of the breakers, now floating like a surf-duck buoyant above them, struggling for a moment with the undertow, and dragged seaward, then cast like a piece of wreck-wood on the shore;—to walk there silent and thoughtful, murmuring 'there go the ships, there goes the leviathan,' and ever to hearken to the beating of that oldest and mightiest pulse which has throbbed since the world began. Oh, the sea is beyond the apostrophe of any poet to picture its sublimity. It has a life, and that the longest; a heart, and that the boldest; a voice, and that the most audible; a calm which is indescribable, but a fury which is beyond control. And when I look upon the hoary mane which lies across its back like the mane of an old lion, the froth which gathers on it from lashing the rocks, and hearken to the sound of its howlings, or to the music of its murmurs in the rosy ear of the conch shells which lie along the

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shore, it appears like some masterful giant, the greatest and most venerable in the physic world. The sons of men, and the trees of the forest do not retain their individuality, but are perpetuated by successive generations. It is a great thing to recognize in those who live, the name and traits of other men who in days past were deemed heroic, or to sit beneath the shadow of a tree whose roots were stricken in centuries gone by. But the sea is the same sea which began to roll at the prime creation when God separated the elements, into which Xerxes cast his shackles, which Canute rebuked, and upon whose billows Jesus walked, and which now throws its great Briarean arms to the ends of the world, enwrapping continents and girdling the sunny isles in its embrace ;—never changing, never corrupting, because it contains within it the very principle of preservation—the salt of the earth. There is great food for reflection upon its brink There the thoughtful may muse solitary, and the religious lifts up his heart to God.

But to recur to what I was saying. When you wish to have a house where you may live the year round, you do well to build it by the river rather than by the sea. The latter accords not so well with social feelings, for there is a dreariness as well

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as majesty in a vast expanse of waters, where you can see no land beyond, and where your thoughts are outward, and onward, and far away. You must have some natural barriers which will hem you in, and make your mind return whence it set out, and your home snug. The sea does not limit you ;— because it appears to have no limits. The Switzer loves his native cot so much, not because the mountains tower beyond his sight and are lost in clouds, but because their sloping bases so wind about it, as to form pleasant vallies and sequestered nooks and natural walls the most impregnable to guard his little paradise on earth. Perhaps the peasant has not that poetic feeling which tempts the traveller to where the avalanche threatens and the chamois leaps from cliffs to ice clad cliff, and Mont Blanc "monarch of mountains," upheaves the skies. His affection arises from a different principle. His little cot is placed in a valley which catches all the sunbeams, where he is within sight of grandeur but surrounded with beauty, where the avalanche cannot hurt him, but he hears the sound of the cascade and cataract, and with clear resilience the echoes of the *Ranz des Vachs.* There can he walk securely with those he loves, and on being removed thence,

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he pines away and dies with a dreadful sinking and sickness of the heart.

Therefore I think that the silver stream of a river is a better boundary for your habitation, than the illimitable sea, because although occasionally you may wish to look upon the grandeur, you would not always bear the fury of the storm. Having tender Haywardes, you must be where the winter winds will not visit you too bleakly; you must woo the amenities of the landscape, live on the edge of the waves, not breakers, upon whose glassy surface you may see the trees inverted, the image of the rose repeated in the clear cold depths, the stars twinkling by night in a mock firmament, and where it may be a matter of marvel to your little boys how Chestnut Cottage, far off as it is, should be turned upside down, as if it stood on the very brink of the water.

When your house, though not grand or towering, not marked with wooden and ambitious colonnades of Ionian or Corinthian columns; not aping styles of architecture which ill comport with its size or its location, but with a harmony which costs no money, although it can only be had as the result of taste improved by study and chastised by art; in which length shall correspond with breadth, and both with

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height, and all details with the material of which the structure is builded, so that lightness or massive strength may have reference and relation to surrounding things, and colour itself may be made to blend pleasantly with adjoining colours, but above all, that the house may be consonant to the character of the owner, to the design and purposes for which it has been built, and be an example of domestic architecture to the whole docile neighbourhood, and not a mere challenge to the vulgar who happen to be possessed of wealth :—when, I say, the whole has been reared, and the carpenters have removed their tools, and the painters have gone away, and the smell of the paint has evaporated, it is expected by your friends that you fling open the folding doors, light up the wax candles, and give an old fashioned "house warming," do you hear? I would sooner be present than to have a ticket to the Inauguration of the Crystal Palace. You will not live in a glass house, which is well enough, as you sometimes write satires, but in a much more substantial residence, let us hope, because the ground it stands on is your own. There is no sentiment in dwelling in a hired tenement, even if it blaze with a factitious splendour. For though the roof protects you, what protects the roof? I wish to see what start

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you will make, and with what kind of a grace you are going to dispense hospitality on your own ground when relieved from every vestige and disability of the feudal system. Upon my word I would not wish to own a decent, comfortable house, and live in it after the fashion of some people, in the same torpid security with which a snail inhabits its shell. For they see nobody, or think that some annual, heartless, vapid, showy supper, will be a set off for the genial, easy, intercourse which should be a part of every day, or hour. I go in heartily and devoutly for the sedulous cultivation of the social element in every man's character. By neglect or solitude, a taste for that happiness which it confers will fast decay, and general shyness and apathy ensue. It is pleasant to see people with some little life in them, and who are ready to welcome the occasion with an alacrity and lighting up of the countenance, and who have some pressure in the grasp, if it be not so strong as to crush the knuckles. And although there are individuals whom seclusion is befitting, as the State prisoner in his cell, the sick man in his chamber, the student in his closet, or the afflicted in his retirement, it is essential to the proper enjoyment of life while it lasts, and to the healthy constitution of the general social body, that there

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should be a frequent congress of its members. There is no such thing as solitude except by contrast;—I mean that there is no such thing as natural and healthful privacy. What says the Great Zimmerman, whose name is indissolubly connected with a theme of which he has treated so charmingly. "The pleasures of society, though they may be attended with unhappy effect and pernicious consequences to men of weak heads and corrupted hearts, who only follow them for the purpose of indulging the follies and gratifying the vices to which they have given birth, are yet capable of affording to the wise and virtuous, a high, rational, sublime and satisfactory enjoyment. The world is the only theatre upon which great and noble actions can be performed, or the heights of moral and intellectual excellence usefully attained;" and he says toward the conclusion of his most excellent work that the chief design of it is "to exhibit the necessity of combining the uses of solitude with those of society, to show in the strongest light the advantages they may mutually derive from each other, to convince mankind of the danger of running into either extreme; to teach the advocate of uninterrupted society how highly all the social virtues may be improved, and its vices easily abandoned by habits of solitary abstraction;

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and the advocate for continual solitude how much that indocility and arrogance of character, which is contracted by a total absence from the world, may be corrected by the urbanity of society." These are the very ideas which I would advocate, and which apply peculiarly to the case of every country gentleman. It is pitiful to see so many delightful rural neighbourhoods where people of equal, or nearly equal quality, live near together, who have abandoned themselves to petty feelings and the adjustment of their several shades of respectability instead of forgetting all in a constant and whole-souled hospitality. A partial blending even with imperfect sympathies, would be better than nothing, while in seclusion and aversion and a dull apathy, are hatched as in some secret favourable spot, the eggs of envy, malice, detraction and uncharitableness.

Because, therefore, one lives in the country, that is not to say that thereafter he must live alone. One great duty of the cultivated man, is to try by his example to help the progress of ideas like the above among the rural population who give up too much time to work, live too much in the kitchen, and who have little of that vivacity which distinguishes even the oppressed people of the Continent of Europe.

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Their very speech is lazy, the current of their conversation as languid as the waters of a duck-pond, accompanied not with sparkling eyes, or even with a see-saw, sawney gesture, not spoken tripplingly or trillingly with inflection, cadence, and a sharp emphasis. You never see them collected under the trees of a summer evening, young and old, with an apparent freedom in all their motions, partaking of nick-nacks, listening to the sound of a flute or a viol. It is true that on a fourth of July, when the heat is sweltering, they will start off early in the morning, and make a day's work of it in dragging after them heavy baskets loaded with root beer and such trash miles into the country, coming back at evening tired out and satiated with amusement for a year. Or perhaps others will go in the winter to a ball at a country tavern, where, as recreation has been such a scarce commodity, they are apt to proceed to great excess. As to a constant habit of sociality, it is not known. A tea table with its loads of unhealthy cake and sweetmeats, and solemn silence is the ultimatum. A large proportion do not partake at home in all their fulness of the refinements of life and comforts which they have richly earned, and which they are able to enjoy. The very process of acquisition seems to have raised an insurmountable barrier to

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the use. A man who will not be generous to himself, will never be ready to make sacrifices for others. Always treat yourself politely, kindly and genially, (but never extravagantly,) if you can do so with justice, and your neighbour as yourself. Charity does not even begin at home with some, and of course, in a perverted sense, there is no end of their good deeds, because that can have no end which has no beginning.

I perceived, while strolling over your ground, that you have already laid out the walks of a pleasant garden, where you may obtain your fresh vegetables, from the early radish to the late celery and snowy-headed cauliflower, and as to flowers, it will be embellished like a painting in the Crystal Palace drawn by some fair hand, in which is all the floral train described by Shakspere in his plays, with the "sweet musk-rose" in the centre. A garden, however small, if it only contain a few beds, a little sage and thyme and parsly, has about it a smack of the old Eden, before the fall. There you will notice the gradual growth of plants in the early spring, and get a smell of the mould as you stoop down to root out a weed or to pluck a violet.

The great Lord Chancellor Bacon, in writing pleasantly on this subject, to which he imparts a

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portion of his universal learning, says that "the contents are not to be under *thirty acres*, divided into three parts, a green in the entrance, a heath or desert in the going forth, and the main garden in the midst with allies on both sides." But this applies only to the "royal ordering of gardens," and is according to that scale of princely living, a taste for which reduced that paragon of letters to the dust of humility, brought a slur on the new philosophy in the very person of its illustrious founder, and caused him at last to bequeath his "name and memory to foreign nations, and to his own countrymen *after some time be passed over*." "There ought," says he, "to be gardens for every month in the year, in which severally things of beauty may be then in season. For November, December, January and February, you must take such things as be green all winter, holly, ivy, bays, juniper, cypress trees, yew, fir trees, rosemary, periwinkle, the white, the purple and the blue germander, flags, orange trees, lemon trees and myrtle, if *they be stoved*, and sweet marjeram, *warm set*.

For the latter part of January and February, you have also the *merzereon* tree, which then blossoms, *crocus vernus*, both the yellow and the grey prim-

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rose, anemonies, the early tulip, hyacinthus orientalis, chamairis, fritellaria.

For March, here come the violets, especially the single blue, which are then earliest, the yellow daffodil, the daisy, the almond tree in blossom, the peach tree in blossom, sweet brier.

In April follow the double white violet, the wallflower, the stock gillies, the cowslip, flower-de-luce, and lillies of all natures, the tulip, the double piony, the pale daffodil, the honeysuckle, the cherry tree in full bloom, the damascene and plum tree, the white thorn in leaf, the lelach tree."

Then he goes on to mention buglos, columbine, ribes, rasps, sweet satyrian, *lilium convallium*, melocotones, wardens, services, medlars, bullaces, &c.

"And because," saith he, "the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air, where it comes and goes, like the warbling of music, than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight than to know what be the flowers and plants that best perfume the air. Roses damask and red are *fast* flowers of their smells, so that you may walk by a whole row of them and find nothing of their sweetness; yea though they be wet with a morning's dew. Those which yield the sweetest smell are the strawberry leaves when dying, the flower of vines, a little dust

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which grows on the cluster in the first coming forth, wall flowers very delightful to be set under a parlour and lower window, and honeysuckles, so that they be somewhat afar off."

Here you have from one, and him as wise as Solomon in things of natural science, the catalogue of all the trees, shrubs, fruits and flowers which are pleasant to the eye, agreeable to the taste, and which give forth a "most excellent, cordial odour."

There are other matters alluded to by the Lord Chancellor in his essay, such as hedges, arbours, aviaries, fish pools, fountains, reservoirs, which were no doubt practised upon by him in his palmy days, and for which I refer you to his works, which are, I believe, to be found on the shelves of the Hayward library. I have often thought that it was a redeeming circumstance in the great man's lot, that when the incense of adulation was no longer given, the incense of flowers was not withdrawn, for these are often the most sweet allayment for a wounded spirit, and for slights, cuts, indignities and the aversions of men.

But I shall also suggest something which is not found in the above treatise, and that is, that you are to have a sun-dial in the middle of your garden, and under the embowering trees in some alley, a couple

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of bee houses made semi-globular, of twisted straw after the old fashion, forasmuch as they have a more rustic look, and are a better ornament than Yankee bee hives. Thence you shall see the little rovers sally forth upon a bright spring morning to commit their petit larcenies, sipping from the cups in which the humming bird has plunged his beak, and which the winds have rifled, supplying all the cells with virgin honey, yet without a damage done to any rose. There you shall watch them on their swift return from apple orchards and from banks "whereon the wild thyme grows" with gilded thighs, like little ingots hung about their waists, and all that marvellous economy in which we see their instinct excelling art. There you shall behold a model of good government, patterns of loyalty and industry, as well as the sweet rewards of toil.

Bees bring good luck as well as birds. It was a summer morning, as I sat in my own chamber, and the windows were all wide open to admit the breeze, and I was listening to the song of birds, to the plash of the waves, and tinkling of kine in the neighbouring meadows, when suddenly down the hills of Rhineland there came a tumultuous company of boys and girls, accompanied by the cymbals and music of the Corobantes, while over the heads of

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all the youthful revellers as they beat the flashing pails and wares of Cornwall, I beheld a moving cloud, and above the din I heard a hum, a buzz, a murmur of the bees in agitation, still moving on but with their phalanxes steadily wheeling about the queen. The queen was in the centre of the flying group, protected by her thick body-guard, while I could observe the scattered scouts, and many outer sentinels fall victims to the birds. Onward they came, and still the humming and the din became more aggravated until the swarming bees began to flit and buzz around the very porch and windows of the house. The combatants came within where they were reinforced in the hall of the old farm house by all manner of brazen implements and *tin* tinabulations; the cook, the chambermaid, the little boy, the fat woman, and the rosy-cheeked girls, all helped along the Callathumpian band, and ever and anon the latter rushed with screams into some upper room chased by a solitary, wanton bee. Under the pear tree on the green there stood a table spread with a clean white cloth on which was placed the medicated hive or box besmeared with sweets. But this house of refuge was rejected: it did not so please the mind of the queen bee. The whole swarm entered the windows of my chamber and

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hung like a bunch of grapes on the low post of my bed. This I accounted a good omen, and I patiently wait until this day for something which deserves the name of luck to overtake me. Alas! there is always a lion in the way, but when he is slain, I hope that some honey may be found in his carcase.

Haywarde, as you have a numerous family, I sincerely hope that Chestnut Cottage may not for a long period or never share the fate of that old man's heritage of which I just spoke, but may be of the nature of an entailed estate. Thus you will not be planning walks, training briers and making terraces for some Bathyllus who is to come after you. *Sic vos non vobis* will not apply; nor will you be like the birds, the sheep, the bees, the oxen which Virgilius speaks of. But admit that it is so. Hold an acorn in your hand, and imagine the fairy trunk and roots and limbs and foliage which are even now enshrined invisible within its polished walls. Are you one of those who would not cover it with a little dust for fear a stranger should enjoy the future shadow? What avenue of trees should we now walk under, and how would every public road be like a passage through a stately forest, if former men had dropped in a row of acorns for the benefit of us strangers. But selfishness is deeper rooted

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than the trees would now be, or rather in charity let us suppose that men do not think of a future which is not circumscribed by their own interests.

But I must not go on to a tedious prolixity, and I now conclude by assuring you of my wishes for your future prosperity, and can imagine the pleasure which you will hereafter experience when leaving the hot and crowded city at the close of a summer's day, you shall arrive at the door of Chestnut Cottage, and having brushed off the dust, put on a clean shirt, and washed your hands and face, you walk forth upon your terrace which directly faces the grand gigantic, natural wall of the Palisades, and the expansive river. There you will have embowered seats, and it will be the very place in which to meditate aright, to read a book, or to compose a poem, and as the hour of twilight creeps along, and the crests of the waves flash in the moonbeams, and the hum of the departing day has ceased, your friends and family shall gather round to hear the *tum-tum* of the light guitar, and the rippling of the river. In a few years you will have your trees rooted, your vines blooming, your grass in order, your walks laid out, and the whole place so arranged that it would meet the approbation of Blenerhasset; and although it is no Chatsworth with its Paradisal lawns and ut-

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most luxury of landscape, nor is your garden ordered with that right royal breath and scope advised by England's learned Chancellor ;—nay, though you are rather straitened to the *quatuor jugera* of the poet, in which to plant the shrubs of every season, and raise the plants productive of a most excellent, cordial odour, your sylvan theatre is large enough for the exhibition of a correct taste, a contented mind and all the graces of hospitality. Let others own the acres ; as far as eye can reach, the *prospect* is your own ; below, the wide expansive basin of the Tappaan Sea ; above, the towering Highlands ; beyond, the blue line of the Kaatskills, classic ground. Here then, let our aspirations be, for many a pleasant morning, attempered noonday, serene and starlit evening of our days among the sylvan sceneries, UP THE RIVER.

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